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List of supplementary items proposed for inclusion in the agenda of the seventieth session of the General Assembly*

1. Observer status for the International Civil Defence Organization in the General Assembly [item proposed by the Russian Federation (A/70/191)].
2. Observer status for the Indian Ocean Rim Association in the General Assembly [item proposed by Australia (A/70/192)].
3. Global awareness of the tragedies of irregular migrants in the Mediterranean basin with specific emphasis on Syrian asylum seekers [item proposed by Turkey (A/70/193)].
4. Observer status for the International Conference of Asian Political Parties in the General Assembly [item proposed by Australia, Cambodia, Japan, Nepal, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Sri Lanka (A/70/194)].

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Seventieth session
Item 63 of the provisional agenda*
Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples

Question of Western Sahara

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report, submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 69/101, provides a summary of the most recent report submitted by the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the situation concerning Western Sahara (S/2015/246) and an update on developments since the publication of that report, covering the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015.

* A/70/150.

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1. On 5 December 2014, the General Assembly adopted resolution 69/101 on the question of Western Sahara without a vote. The present report, covering the period from 1 July 2014 to 30 June 2015, is submitted in accordance with paragraph 7 of that resolution.

2. The Security Council addresses Western Sahara as a matter of peace and security, calling in successive resolutions for a "mutually acceptable political solution, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara". The Fourth Committee of the General Assembly (Special Political and Decolonization Committee) and the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples address Western Sahara as a Non-Self-Governing Territory and an issue of decolonization.

3. Pursuant to Security Council resolution 2152 (2014), the Secretary-General submitted a report to the Council on the situation concerning Western Sahara (S/2015/246) in which he informed the Council of the activities of his Personal Envoy, Christopher Ross, to promote negotiations on the future of Western Sahara and of the existing challenges to the operations of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO).

4. The renewed and sustained efforts of the United Nations notwithstanding, there has been no progress towards resolving the dispute over the status of Western Sahara. In that respect, the efforts of the Personal Envoy and of MINURSO remain more relevant than ever.

5. During the reporting period, Morocco expressed strong reservations regarding elements of the 2014 report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council (S/2014/258), the contours of the negotiating process and the mandate of MINURSO. It requested clarifications for the purpose of ensuring that, from its perspective, the negotiating process would proceed smoothly, including with regard to the preparation of the reports of the Secretary-General to the Council. That led to a protracted period of exchanges to address those issues during which the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Western Sahara and Head of MINURSO, Kim Bolduc (Canada), was unable to deploy. She eventually arrived in the Mission on 6 February 2015, despite having been appointed on 12 May 2014 and expected to assume her functions on 1 September 2014.

6. On 22 January 2015, King Mohammed VI and the Secretary-General spoke by telephone and agreed on the way forward. The Secretary-General gave assurances that great care would be taken in the preparation of his future reports and that he would not seek a change in the mandate of MINURSO. On that basis, the Special Representative could take up her duties in Laayoune and the Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General could resume his activities. After the call, the Personal Envoy undertook two rounds of consultations in the region, in February and March, to re-establish contact with interlocutors old and new, strengthen confidence in the negotiating process and clarify the way forward.

7. During his meetings, the Personal Envoy highlighted the importance of negotiating without preconditions and in good faith and urged the parties to move beyond their respective proposals by seeking innovative approaches that could help to achieve progress towards "a mutually acceptable political solution, which will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara", as called for in

successive Security Council resolutions. As on earlier visits, he also underscored that flexibility was needed from all concerned if progress were to be made, given that the negotiating process was being conducted under Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations, while acknowledging that each party was thus free to accept or reject the proposals of the other. He recalled that, for the United Nations, the formal parties to the negotiations were Morocco and the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguia el-Hamra y de Río de Oro (Frente Polisario). He also reiterated his availability to continue to encourage neighbouring States to contribute to finding a way forward.

8. During the tour of the Personal Envoy to the region in February, the Moroccan authorities expressed the hope that the negotiating process would develop in a serene way and without surprises. They also reiterated the long-standing position of Morocco that the autonomy proposal that it had presented in 2007 should serve as the basis for negotiation. In Rabouni, near Tindouf, Algeria, the Frente Polisario leaders expressed disappointment at the lack of progress in the negotiating process, voiced regret that the Secretary-General had provided assurances to Morocco without consulting them as the other party and manifested their unhappiness over what they perceived as a lack of attention from the United Nations to their express concerns, including the preparation of the report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council.

9. In Nouakchott, the Mauritanian authorities reiterated their long-standing position of "positive neutrality", underlining the negative spillover effects of the absence of a resolution of the conflict, in particular with regard to drug trafficking. In Algiers, the authorities also reiterated their long-standing position regarding the importance of holding a referendum of self-determination to determine the future of Western Sahara. They further insisted on the significance of a balanced negotiating process under the auspices of the United Nations and strongly criticized the provision of what they termed "unilateral and counterproductive" assurances to Morocco.

10. In March, the Personal Envoy returned to the region to consult on the next steps. He emphasized the dangers of the situation in the Sahelo-Saharan region, the growing frustrations in the refugee camps and the importance of an early solution to the Western Sahara conflict. A consensus emerged that a return to face-to-face discussions between the parties was premature and that he should continue his programme of bilateral consultations and shuttle diplomacy for the foreseeable future.

11. During the period from February to April, the Personal Envoy also initiated a new series of consultations with members of the Group of Friends of Western Sahara, visiting successively Madrid, Paris, London, Moscow and Washington, D.C. In those discussions, he sought the renewed support of his interlocutors for his efforts. He highlighted the importance of increased pressure on both parties to effectively address both the substance of a mutually acceptable political solution and the means of exercising self-determination. He drew attention to the growing security threats in the Sahelo-Saharan region, including a possible future nexus between the frustrated refugee population, especially its young people, and the expanded activities of criminal and violent extremist and terrorist groups. He also requested the members of the Group to join him in impressing upon the parties the

need for flexibility in the search for a compromise. Interlocutors in all five capitals expressed their support for his efforts.

12. On 15 April, MINURSO reduced its operations east of the berm in response to the implementation by Frente Polisario of passport-stamping requirements for Mission personnel on arrival in and exit from the area under its control, replicating the Moroccan practice in the western part of the Territory. It resumed full operations on 9 May following the temporary suspension of those requirements by Frente Polisario.

13. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) conducted a mission to Morocco and Western Sahara from 12 to 18 April to assess human rights developments and existing challenges on the ground and to explore ways to cooperate to ensure the effective protection of human rights in Western Sahara. During the mission, the OHCHR team met a wide spectrum of government officials, local authorities, the Moroccan National Human Rights Council, civil society representatives and victims to complete its assessment. OHCHR will carry out a similar mission to the refugee camps near Tindouf in the middle of 2015. Those missions and other future forms of cooperation should contribute to an independent and impartial understanding of the human rights situation in both Western Sahara and the camps, with the goal of ensuring protection of all, as well as to comprehensive and sustained implementation of international human rights standards by the parties. The issue of human rights remains important to any resolution of the conflict.

14. After the adoption by the Security Council of resolution 2218 (2015) in April, the Secretary-General deployed the Chef de Cabinet to the region to give new impetus to the negotiating process. The visit also served to convey the personal commitment and engagement of the Secretary-General through a call for stronger political will and a return to the negotiating table before his scheduled visit to the region later in 2015. Her visit also offered an opportunity to respond to the questions of the parties and to reiterate the full confidence of the Secretary-General in his Personal Envoy and his approach.

15. The engagement of MINURSO with the authorities west of the berm declined in the months before the Special Representative of the Secretary-General was able to deploy. This included a decline in contacts with senior officials, whose interlocutor in implementing the MINURSO mandate is normally the Special Representative.

16. During the reporting period, MINURSO observed one new violation of freedom of movement by the Royal Moroccan Army, while nine long-standing violations remained. East of the berm, MINURSO recorded two new violations and two freedom-of-movement violations by Frente Polisario forces, while three long-standing violations remained. In their discussions with MINURSO, both parties reiterated their commitment to the ceasefire. The Mission's assessment is that both parties remain fully committed to and respectful of the ceasefire and that the violations observed do not jeopardize it in the medium term. Rather, as has been observed in previous reports, they have resulted in a gradual shift in the original military status quo over the years.

17. Both parties continue to diverge significantly in their interpretation of the MINURSO mandate, a situation that continues to have an impact on the credibility

of the Mission vis-à-vis the parties, affecting its ability to fully implement its mandate and exercise standard peacekeeping functions. For the United Nations, the successive Security Council resolutions define the mandate of MINURSO. In parallel, the standard peacekeeping functions performed by United Nations missions throughout the world, including assessments of and reporting on local conditions that may affect their operations and the political processes, underpin the effective implementation of that mandate.

18. While the security environment in Western Sahara appears generally stable, the longer-term effects of regional instability remain of serious concern for the Secretary-General, as well as for the Mission, the parties and their neighbours, all of which have taken additional security measures to prevent infiltration by violent extremist and terrorist groups. Given the potential effects of increasing regional insecurity, MINURSO enhanced attention to and assessment of security conditions in its area of operation, requiring military observers to maintain a state of high alert and to keep the Mission abreast of suspected illegal activities that could affect their safety.

19. The new Special Representative of the Secretary-General arrived in the Mission on 6 February 2015, following the conclusion of her predecessor's assignment on 31 July 2014. She had performed the MINURSO leadership function from Headquarters in New York since 15 November 2014. Upon her deployment, the Moroccan authorities assured her of their intention to cooperate fully with MINURSO in all matters concerning the implementation of the Mission's mandate as defined by the Security Council. They indicated that prior agreements and procedures would be maintained. For its part, the Frente Polisario leadership renewed its commitment to full support for and cooperation with the Special Representative in implementing the Mission's mandate. The liaison office in Tindouf maintained constructive cooperation with the civilian and military components of Frente Polisario on all matters relating to the implementation of the Mission's mandate.

20. As stated during his briefing to the Security Council in April, the Personal Envoy is seeking to give new impetus to the negotiating process between Frente Polisario and Morocco. He insisted upon the need for rapid progress towards a solution, underscoring that the international community could not stand aside as the tens of thousands of refugees lost faith in a political solution and considered bellicose alternatives. He stressed that, in the light of the increasingly complex dynamics in the region, it was time to encourage both parties to commit themselves seriously to the negotiating process. In particular, he warned that the worsening security situation in the region, the proximity of criminal, extremist and terrorist groups and the increasing frustration of young people constituted a dangerous nexus that could potentially result in instabilities in the region.

21. The conflict presents very real dangers in a region that is particularly volatile. If unleashed, forces at play may pose threats that are beyond any single actor's control. Addressing those challenges requires cooperation among all stakeholders. The Secretary-General is convinced that the conflict can and must be resolved as soon as possible. It is up to the entire international community to urge the parties and the neighbouring States to do their part in making real progress.

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Programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015

United Nations Office for Partnerships

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly decisions 52/466 and 53/475, wherein the Secretary-General was requested to inform the Assembly, on a regular basis, about the activities of the United Nations Office for Partnerships. It supplements the information contained in the previous reports of the Secretary-General (A/53/700 and Add.1, A/54/664 and Add.1-3, A/55/763 and Corr.1, A/57/133, A/58/173, A/59/170, A/60/327, A/61/189, A/62/220, A/63/257, A/64/91, A/65/347, A/66/188, A/67/165, A/68/186 and A/69/218).

The United Nations Office for Partnerships serves as a gateway for public-private partnerships in furtherance of the Millennium Development Goals. The Office oversees the following areas:

United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP). UNFIP was established in 1998 to serve as the interface between the United Nations Foundation and the United Nations system. At the end of 2014, the cumulative allocations as approved by the United Nations Foundation for UNFIP projects to be implemented by the United Nations system reached approximately $1.36 billion. Of this amount, it is estimated that $0.45 billion (about 33 per cent) represents core Turner funds and that $0.91 billion (about 67 per cent) was generated from co-financing partners. The total number of United Nations projects and programmes supported as at the end of 2014 by the United Nations Foundation through UNFIP stands at 563. Collectively, these projects are implemented by 43 United Nations entities in 124 countries.

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United Nations Democracy Fund. The Fund was established by the Secretary-General in July 2005 to support democratization around the world. It focuses on strengthening the voice of civil society, promoting human rights and ensuring the participation of all groups in democratic processes. Through the Fund, the Office has channelled approximately $145 million to more than 540 projects in over 120 countries around the world, ranging from strengthening civil society leadership skills and promoting the participation of women and youth, to media programmes allowing civil society to project its voice.

Partnership advisory and outreach services. The Office for Partnerships provides these services in response to demand from the United Nations system, Governments and non-State actors in pursuing public-private partnerships, through high-impact events and advice to potential partners regarding opportunities and good practices to promote the Millennium Development Goals and the overall post-2015 development agenda as a framework for action.

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I. United Nations Fund for International Partnerships

1. The United Nations Fund for International Partnerships (UNFIP) was established in 1998 to serve as the interface between the United Nations Foundation and the United Nations system. The work of UNFIP is overseen by the UNFIP Advisory Board, which is chaired by the Deputy Secretary-General.

2. As at 31 December 2014, the cumulative allocations approved by the United Nations Foundation for UNFIP projects reached more than $1.36 billion, out of which $0.45 billion (about 33 per cent) comes from core Turner funds and $0.91 billion (about 67 per cent) was generated as co-financing from other partners. Since the Fund's inception, 563 projects have been implemented or are under implementation by 43 United Nations entities in 124 countries. During the course of 2014, the United Nations Foundation approved projects totalling $56.8 million, the majority ($53.8 million) focused on global health. The selection of projects and initiatives supported by the United Nations Foundation through UNFIP is highlighted in this report.

New Revised and Restated Relationship Agreement between the United Nations and the United Nations Foundation

3. The United Nations Foundation was founded by Ted Turner as a grant-making private Foundation which aimed to demonstrate the value of investing in the United Nations, encourage other sectors to work with the United Nations, and promote strong United States leadership at the United Nations.

4. The United Nations Foundation's activities have since evolved from primarily grant making to resource mobilization, as well as advocacy and building of major communication campaigns and cross-sector partnerships in support of United Nations goals. The original Relationship Agreement between the United Nations and the United Nations Foundation, as established in 1998 and subsequently renewed in 2007, was therefore revised and amended to ensure that it reflects the evolved mission of the United Nations Foundation's collaboration with the United Nations.

5. The new Revised and Restated Relationship Agreement was signed on 23 October 2014. The Agreement renews the partnership for an additional 10-year period. Under the terms of the new Relationship Agreement, the United Nations and the United Nations Foundation are to consult more closely and coordinate on activities being undertaken. A Joint Coordinating Committee, established under the new Agreement, is the principal forum to ensure strong and timely communication and coordination. The Committee is co-chaired by the United Nations and the United Nations Foundation and has an equal number of members from each organization.

Support for innovative partnerships, campaigns and initiatives

6. The United Nations Foundation has been collaborating with the United Nations to foster innovative partnerships, campaigns and initiatives to secure better and healthier lives for people across the globe by focusing on global health; women, girls and population; and energy and climate. The United Nations Foundation has also been committed to advancing the work of the United Nations by expanding its support base with a focus on the United States and informing the public and policymakers on the work of the Organization.

A. Global health

7. Enhancing the United Nations health agenda globally has been one of the United Nations Foundation's main objectives. The United Nations Foundation leverages its expertise, resources and experience to help the United Nations to address global health priorities, including delivering life-saving vaccines and anti-malaria nets, harnessing mobile technologies to improve public health, empowering women and girls with the tools to plan their families and have safe pregnancies, and preventing domestic air pollution by providing clean cookstoves to families.

8. The United Nations Foundation, together with UNFIP, has worked in close collaboration with the Office of the Secretary-General, the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) to support a number of key global health campaigns and initiatives working to eliminate preventable diseases such as polio, measles, rubella and malaria.

9. The United Nations Foundation has also collaborated closely with the United Nations to build strong support among multi-stakeholder partners for Every Woman, Every Child, the innovative global movement launched by the Secretary-General during the Millennium Development Goals Summit in September 2010. This movement aims to end all preventable deaths of women, children and adolescents and ensure their well-being.

Every Woman, Every Child

10. The United Nations Foundation continued to support Every Woman, Every Child, which mobilizes commitments and action by Governments, multilateral organizations, the private sector and civil society to address the major health challenges facing the most vulnerable women and children. The movement puts into action the Global Strategy for Women's and Children's Health, which presents a road map on how to enhance financing, strengthen policy and improve service on the ground. With guidance and leadership from the Every Woman, Every Child Health Team in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General, the United Nations Foundation manages global advocacy and communications and provides outreach to the private sector around this movement.

11. Little attention has been paid to the role that access to energy plays in influencing the quality, availability and safety of essential reproductive, newborn and child health services. In this context, the United Nations Foundation provided WHO, through UNFIP, with a $100,000 grant in 2014 to address energy needs in health-care facilities in five Sub-Saharan African countries. In addition to conducting a baseline analysis, the project will support the development of a framework and tools for linking energy access considerations to the quality of health-care services provided to women and children and associated health outcomes.

Measles, rubella and polio

12. While easily preventable with vaccines, measles still causes death and disability among children worldwide. The Measles and Rubella Initiative is a global partnership, launched in 2001, committed to reducing measles deaths and limiting

the number of children born with congenital rubella syndrome. The Initiative is led jointly by WHO, UNICEF, the American Red Cross, the United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the United Nations Foundation. The Initiative aims to advance the Global Measles and Rubella Strategic Plan 2012-2020 by helping countries to increase vaccination coverage for measles, rubella and other preventable diseases; fund, plan, implement and monitor quality supplementary campaigns; investigate outbreaks and provide technical and financial support for effective disease surveillance and outbreak response.

13. The United Nations Foundation has been a long-standing supporter of the Measles Initiative (renamed the Measles and Rubella Initiative in 2012) and continues to play an important role as both an advocate and fiduciary for the Initiative. During 2014, a total of $51 million was disbursed by the United Nations Foundation through UNFIP to UNICEF and WHO in support of the Measles and Rubella Initiative activities around the world.

14. The United Nations Foundation has also supported the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, which includes WHO and UNICEF as core partners. In 2000, the United Nations Foundation was a founder of the Initiative's Polio Advocacy Group, which provides strategic advice, oversight and accountability, and mobilizes resources to support the polio eradication effort.

Nothing But Nets campaign

15. Nothing But Nets is a global grassroots campaign to raise awareness and funding to fight malaria through the provision of life-saving bednets and other malaria interventions. The Nothing But Nets online giving platform allows for citizens around the world to join the fight against malaria by purchasing and sending a bednet to malaria-affected communities.

16. Nothing But Nets works primarily with UNICEF, WHO and UNHCR to purchase insecticide-treated bednets and distribute them to affected countries in Africa. Net distributions are typically part of a wider public health effort within a country coordinated by the Ministry of Health, the United Nations and other local and international organizations.

17. Since the campaign's launch in 2006, the United Nations Foundation has built up a network of champions, supporters and partners from around the world, including the NBA Cares initiative of the National Basketball Association, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Junior Chamber International, and the MLS WORKS initiative of Major League Soccer.

18. The estimated cost to purchase and deliver an insecticide-treated bednet, provide education on its proper use, and provide other malaria reduction interventions, is about $10. During 2014, the United Nations Foundation disbursed over $1,123,000 through UNFIP to support the distribution of insecticide-treated bednets and other malaria interventions by UNICEF and UNHCR in Chad, Cameroon and Madagascar.

Shot@Life campaign

19. Global coordinated immunization efforts have made significant progress, particularly in reducing cases of measles and polio. Building on the successful outcomes of the Measles and Rubella Initiative and the Global Polio Eradication

Initiative, the United Nations Foundation created the Shot@Life campaign in 2011 to raise awareness and resources to immunize children in developing countries against diseases such as measles, polio, pneumonia and rotavirus.

20. In 2014, the United Nations Foundation continued its partnership with Walgreens, the largest pharmacy chain in the United States, to raise awareness and help to provide vaccines to children in developing countries through the Get a Shot. Give a Shot campaign. Starting in September 2014, for every vaccine administered in the United States at Walgreens pharmacies, an amount equivalent to the price of one vaccine was donated to the campaign. During 2014, the United Nations Foundation disbursed, through UNFIP, $107,000 mobilized partially from the Shot@Life campaign to support the global measles immunization initiative led by WHO and UNICEF.

Assistance to Ebola-affected countries

21. At the request of United Nations partners, the United Nations Foundation set up a dedicated fund in direct response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa in 2014 to enable individuals, companies and civil society to directly support United Nations entities in the outbreak response.

22. Those funds enabled the United Nations Foundation to provide, through UNFIP, a grant of $1,551,500 to WHO to procure necessary supplies to assist Governments in the management of Ebola cases, as well as to provide technical assistance to Governments of affected countries, including field coordinators, epidemiologists, and other relevant experts.

B. Women, girls and population

23. Empowering and addressing the needs of women and girls is key to alleviating poverty, achieving social justice, and enhancing the progress of the global development agenda. Lack of adequate education and family planning services leads to the persistence of chronic poverty, high child and maternal mortality, early marriage, vulnerability to exploitation and a diminished voice in public life.

24. Over the past years, the United Nations Foundation has worked with United Nations partners, including UNFPA, UN-Women, UNICEF and UNHCR, to promote gender equality, improve maternal health care, advance sexual and reproductive health and rights, advocate for stronger support for rights of adolescent girls, and eliminate gender-based violence.

Family Planning 2020

25. Family Planning 2020 is a global partnership that supports women's and girls' access to reproductive health care. It engages Governments, civil society, multilateral organizations, donors, the private sector, and the research and development community in order to provide girls and women with an opportunity to use contraceptives by 2020.

26. Family Planning 2020 has its roots in the London Summit on Family Planning held in 2012, at which more than 20 Governments lent their support and announced their commitments to address the policy, financing, delivery and socio-cultural barriers to women accessing contraceptive information, services and supplies.

27. UNFPA and the Gates Foundation are co-chairs of the Family Planning 2020 initiative, and the United Nations Foundation was asked to serve as the secretariat. The initiative's work is aligned with the Secretary-General's Every Woman, Every Child movement.

Girl Up campaign

28. In September 2010, in response to calls by UNFPA and other United Nations organizations for intensified efforts to address the needs and rights of adolescent girls, the United Nations Foundation launched Girl Up, an innovative advocacy and fundraising campaign that empowers adolescent girls. To date, the Girl Up campaign has mobilized more than half a million advocates and disbursed through UNFIP about $3.6 million for adolescent girl empowerment programmes managed and implemented by United Nations agencies in Ethiopia, Guatemala, Liberia and Malawi.

29. During 2014, the United Nations Foundation disbursed through UNFIP almost $900,000 to UNICEF and UNHCR to support projects advancing the education of Somali refugee girls in Ethiopia and the rights of adolescent girls in Guatemala, including strengthening mechanisms for protection against gender-based violence.

30. In addition to contributions from individuals, the Girl Up campaign has been supported by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Levi Strauss, Johnson & Johnson, American Express, Caterpillar Inc., and the Angelica Fuentes Foundation, among others.

C. Energy and climate

31. Since its inception, the United Nations Foundation has been working closely with the United Nations to help to achieve progress towards a safer, cleaner, more equitable and climate-friendly energy future. The United Nations Foundation has championed action on a range of global climate and energy issues, especially through its support of Sustainable Energy for All, the initiative launched by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon and co-led by the President of the World Bank, Jim Kim.

32. In 2014, in support of the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the United Nations Foundation worked with United Nations partners on helping to ensure that the science of climate change would be communicated to and understood by a wide global audience.

Sustainable Energy for All

33. The Sustainable Energy for All initiative seeks to mobilize action from all sectors of society in support of the three interlinked objectives to be achieved by 2030, namely, ensuring universal access to modern energy services; doubling the global rate of improvement in energy efficiency; and doubling the share of renewable energy in the global energy mix.

34. The General Assembly has recognized the importance of this objective on several occasions — it designated 2012 as the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All and then declared 2014-2024 the Decade of Sustainable Energy for All. Sustainable energy has also been a widely accepted pillar of the post-2015 development agenda as the General Assembly prepares a new set of global goals.

35. In 2014, the United Nations Foundation continued its commitment to supporting the achievement of the three-year milestones set out in the initiative's work programme, and ultimately the initiative's 2030 objectives. Specifically, the United Nations Foundation provided a grant of $400,000 to the Sustainable Energy for All secretariat, through UNFIP, in support of the initiative's strategic work programme.

United Nations climate strategy and 2014 Climate Summit

36. On 23 September 2014, the Secretary-General hosted a Climate Summit at United Nations Headquarters to engage public and private sector leaders to catalyse action to reduce emissions, increase climate resilience and mobilize political will for an ambitious climate agreement by 2015.

37. The United Nations Foundation collaborated closely with the Department of Public Information in advance of the Summit to bolster its media engagement strategy. In close coordination with the United Nations, the United Nations Foundation developed media partnerships with 12 organizations to increase global coverage of the Summit.

38. In order to support collaboration between the United Nations and civil society organizations on climate, the United Nations Foundation organized regular civil society meetings in New York to help to ensure that civil society organizations would help to make the Climate Summit a success, in part by contributing commitments to climate action. To help to engage media, bloggers and civil society organizations, the United Nations Foundation also produced a digital media zone at the Climate Summit. This granted more than 50 high-level bloggers and leaders of civil society organizations access to climate experts and encouraged them to cover the Summit in real time, amplifying the messages and reach.

39. In addition, in 2014 the United Nations Foundation provided, through UNFIP, almost $180,000 to strengthen the capacity of the Climate Change Support Team in the Executive Office of the Secretary-General to design and manage collaborative climate change solutions with the private sector.

40. Finally, the United Nations Foundation joined numerous public and private partners in pledging to contribute to expanded global actions to accelerate energy efficiency through the Global Energy Efficiency Accelerator Platform, launched at the 2014 Climate Summit.

Engaging weathercasters as climate change communicators

41. In 2014, the United Nations Foundation provided $20,000, through UNFIP, to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) to help to strengthen the engagement of weathercasters and presenters at the 2014 Climate Summit. WMO, in collaboration with the Government of Denmark, the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the Department of Public Information, and national meteorological services, organized the following initiatives:

- A global workshop for 80 weathercasters and presenters in Paris.
- A conference supporting media coverage of climate change by leading meteorologists from around the world during the Climate Summit.

– The launch of 20 "weather reports from the year 2050" to promote the Climate Summit in New York and the twentieth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Lima in December 2014.

Through these efforts, the threat of climate change was communicated in new and innovative ways, and the above-mentioned initiatives helped to inform the general public on the issue.

Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves

42. The Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves is a public-private partnership hosted by the United Nations Foundation to save lives, improve livelihoods, empower women, and protect the environment by creating a thriving global market for clean and efficient household cooking solutions. The Alliance has a 10-year goal to foster the adoption of clean cookstoves and fuels in 100 million households by 2020. The Alliance is working with a network of public, private and non-profit partners to help to overcome the market barriers that currently impede the production, deployment and use of clean cookstoves in developing countries.

43. In 2014, United Nations Foundation made a grant of $100,000 to WHO to support the development of a clean household energy planning tool that policy makers can use in addressing household fuel combustion.

D. Advocacy, communication and other development-related issues

44. In close cooperation with the United Nations system, the United Nations Foundation continued to provide much valued assistance to the United Nations in terms of the advocacy and communication platforms it has built over the years to tell the Organization's story and engage new partners to support the United Nations work. These platforms include the Social Good Summit, Talk Radio Day at the United Nations, United Nations press fellowships, and ongoing press round tables to complement the more formal press briefings that occur at the United Nations, as well as issue-specific communications and media work in global health, girls and women, and energy and climate as noted above.

45. The United Nations Foundation's communications efforts during 2014 have focused on working with the United Nations on outreach and advocacy around the Climate Summit, as discussed above; the 500-day countdown mark for the Millennium Development Goals; the Social Good Summit; and public consultation and discussions around the post-2015 global goals.

Accelerating achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and supporting the post-2015 agenda

46. On 18 August 2014, the 500-day mark leading to the end of 2015, the United Nations Foundation worked with the United Nations to create a 500-minute conversation across multiple social media platforms to raise awareness about progress made on the Millennium Development Goals. This global, digital storytelling event provided an opportunity for both the United Nations and the global non-governmental organization community to share success stories of the Millennium Development Goals while calling for increased efforts and attention by

Governments and the private sector. The online conversation included global audiences from 65 countries. To complement this effort, the United Nations Foundation created a social media toolkit with issue-specific messaging for each Goal that participants used to share with their networks.

47. The United Nations Foundation has helped to build relationships with journalists in order to strengthen their capacity to cover United Nations issues and the post-2015 process by broadening their knowledge of United Nations issues and access to United Nations experts through press fellowships, specialized briefings and trips to view the Organization at work. During 2014, the United Nations Foundation engaged more than 75 journalists in areas ranging from climate change to global health, peacekeeping and sustainable energy.

The fifth annual Social Good Summit

48. The fifth annual Social Good Summit was held on 21 and 22 September 2014 in New York with the overarching theme "Connecting for good, connecting for all (#2030NOW)". The purpose of the Summit was to engage new audiences during the high-level segment of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, focusing on how technology and social media can be used to improve the world. The discussions featured a number of experts from the United Nations system who addressed a wide range of issues, from global health to social justice. Through the partnership between the United Nations Foundation and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Summit was broadcast online in seven languages, reaching 159 million people worldwide.

49. In addition to the Summit, the United Nations Foundation, in collaboration with UNDP, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Case Foundation, Cisco, Mashable, the Rockefeller Foundation, among others, set up the +SocialGood online platform, which allows people around the world to engage in conversations related to the Social Good Summit.

50. Furthermore, the Summit engaged over 700 journalists and bloggers via its digital media lounge.

Support for the sixty-fifth annual Department of Public Information/ Non-Governmental Organizations Conference

51. The United Nations Foundation assisted the Department in convening the Department of Public Information/Non-Governmental Organizations Conference, which was held at United Nations Headquarters from 27 to 29 August 2014, on the theme "2015 and beyond: our action agenda". The event provided an opportunity for civil society, international networks and activists from around the world to develop an "action agenda" in the lead-up to the launch of intergovernmental negotiations, at the beginning of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, for the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda.

Global Pulse: big data for development

52. The Secretary-General launched Global Pulse in 2009 to support the United Nations system in generating more timely information to track and monitor the impacts of socio-economic crises, and exploit the opportunities offered by big data. Global Pulse is an inter-agency initiative designed to contribute to the "Delivering

as one" approach to strengthen the capacity of Governments to measure development effectiveness and attainment of the Millennium Development Goals.

53. Since its inception, Global Pulse has led United Nations system efforts to understand how big data may contribute to a post-2015 data revolution and has established expertise in the emerging field of big data for development. The initiative has built a substantial network of development and private-sector partners to advance its innovation efforts, and it has assumed a prominent advocacy role to highlight innovation by others in the field.

54. Global Pulse partners with experts from United Nations agencies, Governments, academia and the private sector to research, develop and mainstream approaches for applying real-time digital data to development and humanitarian challenges. This initiative of the Secretary-General views big data as a global public good and aims to improve development and humanitarian outcomes by driving the adoption of the methodologies, tools and policies needed to harness big data safely and responsibly.

55. In 2014, the United Nations Foundation disbursed almost $645,000 through UNFIP to support the mission and programmatic work of Global Pulse.

II. United Nations Democracy Fund

56. The United Nations Democracy Fund was established during the 2005 World Summit as a Secretary-General's Trust Fund and launched in April 2006, with the United Nations Office for Partnerships/UNFIP providing administrative support and resource-sharing. Since then, the grant-making body has become clearly defined as a fund for civil society organizations. It is the only United Nations entity that has the word "democracy" in its name; the only United Nations body with the primary purpose of supporting democracy through empowering civil society; and one of the youngest entities in the United Nations system. The large majority of project funds go to local civil society organizations in countries in both the transition and consolidation phases of democratization. By supporting the "demand" rather than the "supply" side of democratization, the Fund plays a new, distinct and unique role in complementing and enhancing the United Nations more traditional work — the work with Governments — to strengthen democratic governance around the world.

57. In the short years since its creation, the Fund has experienced considerable growth in its portfolio, its donor base, its impact and its visibility. Its projects aim to strengthen the voice of civil society, promote human rights, and encourage the participation of all groups in democratic processes. It also supports a number of major global and regional projects with a normative and policy focus. In its first eight rounds of funding, the Fund supported more than 540 projects in over 120 countries, with a total disbursement of more than $145 million. They ranged from supporting civil society efforts for accountability and transparency to building capacity for strengthening good governance and the rule of law.

A. Eighth round of funding

58. The eighth round of funding came amid upheavals in several parts of the world. Both civil society groups and the media continued to face growing pressures

and restrictions, and the closing space for civil society became an alarming feature in a range of countries on several continents. The role of popular movements on the one hand and military intervention on the other was hotly debated, with no global consensus on either. At the same time, apathy among the disenchanted and disempowered threatened to become an insidious and increasingly stubborn enemy of democracy.

59. Against this background, the Fund received 2,062 project proposals for its eighth round, reflecting continued high demand for support from the Fund. The proposals originated from organizations in 133 countries, the vast majority local non-governmental organizations in Africa, Asia, Eastern Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean. This response added further to the considerable growth the Fund has experienced since its creation in 2005.

60. The project selection in the eighth round of funding placed a deliberate emphasis on the media, with almost 40 per cent of selected projects operating in this field. This reflected both a recognition of the media's revolutionizing impact in democratization processes, and the need to safeguard its freedom in the face of growing threats and pressures in several countries and regions.

61. In the eighth round, 49 projects were funded at a total cost of $9,455,000. As defined by their key activities, the projects broke down as follows:

Media (38 per cent)

Community development (18 per cent)

Youth (16 per cent)

Rule of law and human rights (12 per cent)

Strengthening instrumentalities of government (6 per cent)

Tools (6 per cent)

Women's empowerment (4 per cent)

B. Donor base

62. The cumulative total amount of contributions received from 2005 to 2014 exceeded $160 million. The number of donor countries rose to 41, as Libya joined the list of contributors for the first time.

C. Evaluation

63. The Fund's contracted firm of internationally renowned evaluators, Transtec, had completed over 125 post-project evaluations by the end of 2014. The vast majority of the evaluations were positive, while also providing valuable lessons learned for the Fund's knowledge management. The Fund published all post-project evaluations on its public website, as decided by its Advisory Board. In this way, it consolidated its position as one of the most transparent entities in the United Nations system.

D. Governance

64. The two governing mechanisms of the Fund, the Advisory Board and the Programme Consultative Group, continued to play an active and guiding role during 2014. In addition to recommending funding proposals for the Secretary-General's approval, the Advisory Board provided him with policy guidance on the development of programme frameworks and funding guidelines. The Programme Consultative Group provided input and quality control in the project selection process and implementation phase, making use of the specific expertise of each of its entities: the Department of Political Affairs, the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Peacebuilding Support Office, UNDP, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and UN-Women.

E. Ninth round of funding

65. The United Nations Democracy Fund launched its ninth round for project proposals in November 2014. When applications closed on 31 December 2014, the Fund had received 2,331 project proposals. The vast majority of applications came from local or regional civil society organizations in Africa, Asia, the Americas, the Arab region and Eastern Europe. In accordance with the annual timetable adhered to by the Fund, ninth round applications were to be assessed by March 2015 and the Advisory Board was to recommend a short list in May, after which the Fund was to advise Permanent Missions of Member States in which listed projects were to be implemented. The short list was then to be submitted to the Secretary-General for approval. Short-listed applicants were to be asked to submit draft project documents by mid-year, to be negotiated with the Fund, and the first tranches of project funding were to be disbursed by September — again in a time line comparing favourably with international standards.

F. Democracy in action

1. A school of democratic procedures for self-governance bodies in all regions of Ukraine

66. In Ukraine, a project funded by the United Nations Democracy Fund works to increase the transparency and accountability of local self-governance by introducing parliamentary procedures in the daily work of selected local councils in all regions of the country, including the east. Under the project, representatives of 24 local authorities, one for each region of Ukraine, attend a School of Democratic Rules and Procedures. Participants work for the adoption of amendments to the regulations of the relevant local authorities to introduce parliamentary procedures and democratic rules — enabling councils to broadcast their sessions on the Internet. By bringing together representatives from all the regions of Ukraine, the School of Democratic Rules and Procedures also advances the concept of holding organized inclusive and peaceful political debate.

2. Empowering indigenous communities in Bolivia through basic legal identity documents

67. In Bolivia, the United Nations Democracy Fund funds a project in the La Paz and Oruro departments, to assist in legally and politically empowering indigenous communities. It is doing so by providing them with basic legal identity documents, prerequisites for democratic participation which many of them have lacked in the past; strengthening their knowledge and capacity to participate in democratic processes and exercise their rights; and improving access to basic legal documents and rights for all, through evidence-based advocacy aimed at institutional change. The project is also setting up a network of rural facilitators to act as focal points for establishing outlets for legal advice, and to run legal campaigns on how to obtain the necessary documentation. As important, the project encourages debate between traditional leaders and government officials in networking meetings and a forum.

3. Upholding the rights of communities and miners amid exploitation of mineral resources in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

68. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, a project funded by the United Nations Democracy Fund works to uphold the economic, social and cultural rights of local communities and traditional miners in relation to the exploitation of mineral resources. The project conducts advocacy for legal reform; dissemination and explanation of legal texts; awareness-raising on rights and obligations among community leaders, the judiciary, and mine administration officials; support for victims of rights violations; organizing of traditional mine diggers; and monitoring of human rights related to the exploitation of natural resources.

III. Partnership advisory and outreach services

69. The United Nations system has collaborated with the private sector, academia and civil society for a number of years. In the 2005 World Summit Outcome (General Assembly resolution 60/1), Member States recognized the importance of, and expressed strong support for, the active engagement of non-State actors in promoting the development agenda of the United Nations system.

70. The United Nations Office for Partnerships works in close collaboration with the United Nations Foundation to engage non-State actors, such as global corporations, philanthropic foundations and civil society organizations to advance United Nations objectives.

71. To promote the Millennium Development Goals and the emerging sustainable development goals, the Office partners with the United Nations programmes and agencies, Member States, the private sector and non-governmental organizations to convene high-impact events and provides advice to potential partners regarding collaborative opportunities and good practices.

72. In 2014, a wide range of companies, foundations and non-governmental organizations approached the United Nations Office for Partnerships to explore opportunities for engagement with the United Nations and offer assistance to pool expertise and resources to address issues on the United Nations agenda. They sought advice on how to specifically partner with the United Nations to advance the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and to learn about collaborative

opportunities related to the emerging post-2015 development agenda. The majority of non-State actors offered assistance in programmes focused on the empowerment of women and girls, education, humanitarian health crises and the use of innovative technologies to tackle poverty.

Selection of key projects and initiatives

73. The following list of key partnership initiatives is divided into three partner categories: (1) Member States, (2) United Nations system and other international organizations, and (3) the private sector and civil society.

1. Member States

Permanent memorial at the United Nations to the victims of slavery and the transatlantic slave trade

74. The United Nations Office for Partnerships continued to support the permanent memorial project and administer the Trust Fund account in relation to receipts, allocations and disbursements of the resources. As at 31 December 2014, the total contributions received were $1,832,622, primarily from Member States. The permanent memorial, entitled *Ark of Return*, was designed by Mr. Rodney Leon, and was unveiled by the Secretary-General and the President of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly, Mr. Sam Kutesa, at a ceremony at United Nations Headquarters on 25 March 2015.

Resilience by design event and exhibit

75. On 2 December 2014, the United Nations Office for Partnerships, the Permanent Missions of the Philippines and Portugal and the Open Online Academy jointly convened a conference and exhibit to highlight crowd-sourced projects for resilient schools and emergency shelters for areas affected by natural disasters and wars. Harnessing the network of the online community, the event featured representatives from the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Global Pulse and the Urban Risk Lab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology to develop solutions to assist Governments in building resilient architecture for vulnerable communities around the world.

2. United Nations system and other international organizations

Equator Prize 2014

76. On 22 September 2014, the United Nations Development Programme held the biennial Equator Prize award ceremony at Lincoln Center in New York. The Equator Prize recognizes leadership by indigenous and local communities working to meet climate and development challenges through sustainable solutions. The United Nations Office for Partnerships assisted UNDP in identifying key partners from the private sector, the creative community and civil society organizations to financially support and speak at the event.

World Toilet Day

77. On 19 November 2014, UN-Water and the Permanent Mission of Singapore hosted an event to observe World Toilet Day at United Nations Headquarters. The

United Nations Office for Partnerships assisted UN-Water and the Water Supply and Sanitation Collaborative Council with media messaging and engagement strategy for a panel discussion on the theme "Open defecation and the challenges for women and girls". Over 2,500 media outlets from around the world featured stories relating to this issue.

3. The private sector and civil society

International Women's Day forum

78. On 4 March 2014, the Business Civic Leadership Center of the United States Chamber of Commerce Foundation and the United Nations Office for Partnerships jointly convened the annual forum on the occasion of International Women's Day at United Nations Headquarters. The forum, on the theme "Turning inspiration into action: next steps for the private sector to empower women globally", brought together business and civil society leaders dedicated to the economic empowerment of women and emphasized the importance of a vision and a commitment to action in achieving results. The forum highlighted the many economic challenges faced by women and girls and how catalytic partnerships between public and private sector organizations are vital in overcoming them.

Media for Social Impact Summit

79. On 11 April 2014, the PVBLIC Foundation and the United Nations Office for Partnerships jointly convened the inaugural Media for Social Impact Summit to highlight the power of the media to drive social change. The Summit gathered United Nations representatives and leading media companies and creative agencies to showcase social good campaigns and provide opportunities for participants to share experiences and inspire new initiatives in advancement of the United Nations objectives.

Social Innovation Summit 2014

80. On 28 and 29 May 2014, the United Nations Office for Partnerships and Landmark Ventures jointly convened the biannual Social Innovation Summit at JP Morgan Chase and at United Nations Headquarters. The two-day event brought together public and private sector leaders to present innovative partnerships and to discuss the role of social and technological innovation in advancing sustainability, as well as creating better livelihood opportunities for youth.

Global Accelerator

81. On 10 June 2014, the United Nations Foundation and the Department of Public Information, in collaboration with the United Nations Office for Partnerships, convened the Global Accelerator event to engage entrepreneurs in United Nations objectives and the post-2015 development agenda. The event gathered over 100 entrepreneurs and high-level United Nations officials to seek innovative and sustainable solutions to challenging development objectives.

Changing lives through mobile

82. On 19 June 2014, the United Nations Office for Partnerships and ChangeCorp co-convened a conference on the theme "Changing lives through mobile: innovation

in emerging markets". Mobile learning has gained increasing momentum in the past few years as successful business models have been created around the world. The Conference gathered telecommunications industry representatives, non-governmental organizations involved in mobile learning and government officials representing emerging markets to showcase several leading mobile for development initiatives being implemented by or with telecommunications operators. The event presented the opportunities and challenges for development in the following tracks: health; women's empowerment; skills training and youth; smart cities; reporting; and mobile money.

Blouin Creative Leadership Summit

83. On 23 and 24 September 2014, the Louise Blouin Foundation, in collaboration with the United Nations Office for Partnerships, convened the ninth annual Blouin Creative Leadership Summit at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. The Summit, created in 2006, is a forum that encourages dialogue and exchange of ideas and best practices to confront global challenges. The 2014 Summit discussions brought together government officials, business executives, entrepreneurs, technology innovators, scholars and artists to address topics such as global governance, education, democracy, the environment and culture.

IV. Conclusions

84. Mr. Turner's historic philanthropic contribution through the United Nations Foundation and UNFIP has greatly increased the interest of civil society, citizens and other stakeholders, including foundations and private companies, in engaging with the United Nations.

85. The United Nations Democracy Fund is now 10 years old and has proved to be an excellent initiative by the General Assembly. It has successfully complemented the work of many United Nations agencies that concentrate on the "supply" side of democratic institutions by focusing on the "demand" side through grants to local civil society organizations.

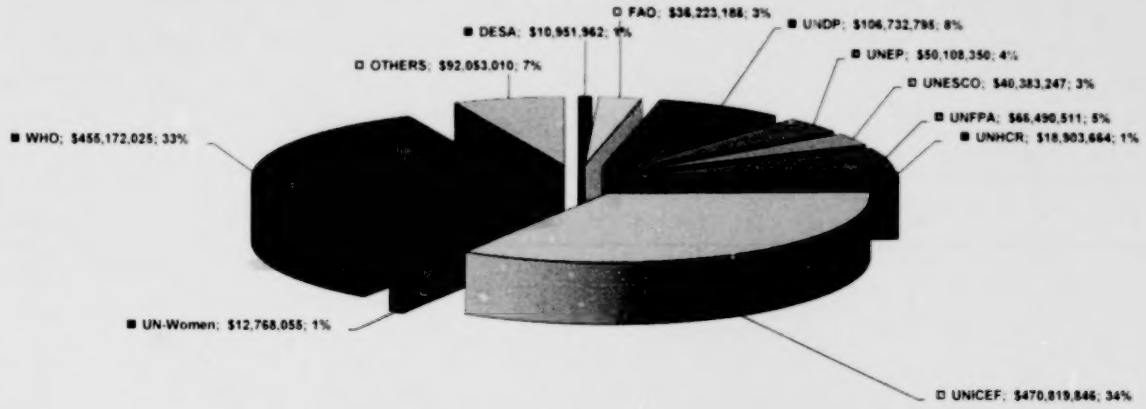
86. The operations of UNFIP and the United Nations Democracy Fund remain the core work of the United Nations Office for Partnerships. The Office has continued to host innovative high-impact events and provide advisory services to a wide range of Member States, as well as external stakeholders who seek to partner with the United Nations system.

Annex I

United Nations Fund for International Partnerships: distribution of funds and projects

A. Cumulative allocations approved by the United Nations Foundation, 1998-2014, distributed by implementing partners

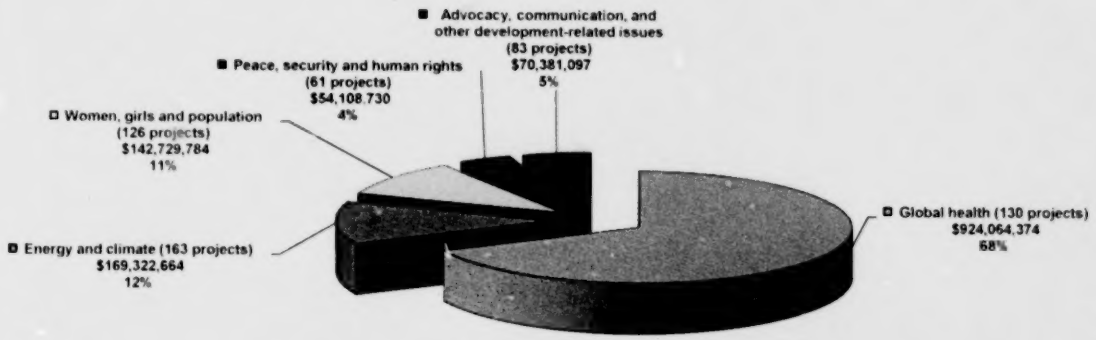
($1,360,606,649)



Abbreviations: DESA, Department of Economic and Social Affairs; FAO, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; UNDP, United Nations Development Programme; UNEP, United Nations Environment Programme; UNESCO, United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization; UNFPA, United Nations Population Fund; UNHCR, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees; UNICEF, United Nations Children's Fund; UN-Women, United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women; WHO, World Health Organization.

B. Thematic distribution of projects approved by the United Nations Foundation, 1998-2014

($1,360,606,649)


Advocacy, communication, and other development-related issues (83 projects) $70,381,097 5%
Peace, security and human rights (61 projects) $54,108,730 4%
Women, girls and population (126 projects) $142,729,784 11%
Energy and climate (163 projects) $169,322,664 12%
Global health (130 projects) $924,064,374 68%

Annex II

Projects approved by the United Nations Foundation in 2014 and in prior years, by programme area

(United States dollars)

	1998-2013		*2014*		*1998-2014*	
Programme area	*Number of projects*	*Value*	*Number of projects*	*Value*	*Number of projects*	*Value*
Global health	124	870 279 306	6	53 785 068	130	924 064 374
Energy and climate	158	168 602 054	5	720 610	163	169 322 664
Women, girls and population	124	141 780 195	2	949 589	126	142 729 784
Peace, security and human rights	61	54 108 730	0	–	61	54 108 730
Advocacy, communication, and other development-related issues	77	69 012 508	6	1 368 589	83	70 381 097
Total	**544**	**1 303 782 793**	**19**	**56 823 856**	**563**	**1 360 606 649**

Annex III

Composition of the Advisory Board of the United Nations Fund for International Partnerships in 2014

Mr. Jan Eliasson, Deputy Secretary-General (Chair)

Ambassador Abdou Salam Diallo, Chair of the Second Committee of the General Assembly (until September 2014)

Ambassador Sebastiano Cardi, Chair of the Second Committee of the General Assembly (since October 2014)

Ambassador Martin Sajdik, President of the Economic and Social Council

Ms. Susan M. Davis, President and Chief Executive Officer, BRAC USA

Mr. Luis A. Ubiñas, former President of the Ford Foundation

Mr. Bruce Usher, Faculty Director, Social Enterprise Program, Columbia Business School

Mr. Yukio Takasu, Under-Secretary-General for Management

Mr. Wu Hongbo, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs

Mr. Roland Rich (member, ex-officio), Officer-in-Charge, United Nations Office for Partnerships (until June 2014)

Ms. Ann de la Roche (member, ex-officio), Officer-in-Charge, United Nations Office for Partnerships (since July 2014)

Annex IV

Financial contributions to the United Nations Democracy Fund, by donor, as at 31 December 2014

(United States dollars)

Donor	*Cumulative contribution received*
Argentina	20 000
Australia	9 212 424
Bulgaria	10 000
Chile	340 000
Croatia	71 000
Cyprus	5 000
Czech Republic	195 780
Denmark	265 018
Ecuador	5 000
Estonia	10 395
France	4 793 716
Georgia	24 943
Germany	15 115 188
Hungary	75 000
India	31 562 543
Iraq	5 000
Ireland	658 724
Israel	57 500
Italy	2 947 800
Japan	10 180 000
Latvia	15 000
Libya	10 000
Lithuania	49 332
Madagascar	5 000
Mongolia	10 000
Morocco	5 000
Panama	27 000
Peru	64 348
Poland	612 276
Portugal	150 000
Qatar	10 000 000
Republic of Korea	1 000 000
Romania	422 860
Senegal	100 000
Slovenia	127 924

Donor	*Cumulative contribution received*
Spain	5 043 312
Sri Lanka	5 000
Sweden	16 023 635
Turkey	235 000
United Kingdom	609 350
United States of America	51 876 000
Other	2 230
Total	**161 948 298**

Annex V

Composition of the Advisory Board of the United Nations Democracy Fund in 2014

Member States

Austr ia

Bhutan

Chile

El Salvador

Germany

India

Latvia

Libya

Poland

Sierra Leone

Suriname

Sweden

United States of America

Non-governmental organizations

Action Aid International

Avaaz

Individuals

Ms. Aracelly Santana

Ms. Marjorie Tiven

Mr. Jeffrey Wright

United Nations A/70/203

General Assembly

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27 July 2015

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Seventieth session
Item 73 (b) of the provisional agenda*
Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms

Human right to safe drinking water and sanitation

Note by the Secretary-General

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the members of the General Assembly the present report of the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, Léo Heller, in accordance with Human Rights Council resolutions 16/2 and 21/2.

* A/70/150.

15-12500 (E) 180815

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Report of the Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation

Summary

The Special Rapporteur on the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation, Léo Heller, submits the present report to the General Assembly in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 24/18. The report provides an overview of the human rights framework for water, sanitation and hygiene, describing the relevant human rights standards and principles that serve to assess different levels and types of service. It continues with an assessment of different types of service through the lens of the human rights framework.

The categories considered for both water and sanitation are connections to a piped network, communal or shared facilities and individual on-site solutions. The report considers these types of services in conjunction with different management models, including utilities; small-scale service providers, with or without a mandate from the State; and self-supply. The realization of the human rights to water and sanitation is influenced by the way in which these various types of services are delivered and the extent to which the State has oversight of the service provided. The report situates this human rights analysis of types of services in the context of State's obligations to progressively realize human rights, focusing particularly on prioritization. Finally, the report discusses the implications for monitoring.

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I. Introduction

1. Realizing the human rights to water and sanitation depends on a combination of various factors. On a national level, these factors include appropriate policies, programmes and planning that reflect a long-term vision to ensure the realization of these rights. Implementation of these policies, programmes and plans includes developing appropriate institutions, financing, regulation and the capacity of local authorities and other actors, as well as the selection, implementation and management of technical solutions. Measures meant to ensure access to water, sanitation and appropriate hygiene practices occur in a variety of contexts that strongly influence how human rights can be realized. Particular political-institutional contexts have a significant impact on levels of support provided for water, sanitation and hygiene services and the sustainability of access; physical characteristics (water availability, geological, topographical and territorial aspects) are relevant for identifying the most appropriate technologies; economic context influences the implementation capacity of the local institutions and the economic sustainability of systems. Other important influences range from demographic characteristics to gender relations and the socio-cultural context.

2. This report aims to discuss to what extent different types of water, sanitation and hygiene services, combined with their diverse management models, comply with the human rights to water and sanitation. It would be simplistic to isolate this discussion from the context in which certain technologies and management options are applied, and to draw any conclusive generalizations. However, the report seeks to highlight the potential benefits and limitations of each type of service and the resulting concerns for the realization of human rights. Governing bodies and service providers may extract lessons from this analysis for their respective planning, assisting them in developing strategies for the progressive realization of the human rights to water and sanitation. Likewise, these lessons may also aid those bodies responsible for monitoring service provision, especially to identify human rights concerns in access to these services.

3. The report considers three types of services (connections to a piped network, communal and shared facilities and individual on-site solutions) in conjunction with different management models, including utilities; small-scale service providers, with or without a mandate from the State; and self-supply. The realization of the human rights to water and sanitation is influenced by the way in which these different types of service are delivered and the extent to which the State has a role of oversight of the service provided. The report situates this human rights analysis of different types of services in the context of States' obligations to progressively realize human rights, focussing particularly on prioritization.

II. Human rights framework for water, sanitation and hygiene

4. Resolution 24/18 of the Human Rights Council recognized "that the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation entitles everyone, without discrimination, to have access to sufficient, safe, acceptable, physically accessible and affordable water for personal and domestic use and to have physical and affordable access to sanitation, in all spheres of life, that is safe, hygienic, secure and acceptable, and that provides privacy and ensures dignity." Building on this definition, the earlier work of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (see

E/C.12/2002/11 and A/HRC/12/24) and of the former Special Rapporteur (see A/HRC/12/24), this section seeks to clarify the meaning of human rights standards and principles for sanitation, water and hygiene, in the light of different types of services.

A. Human rights standards for sanitation

5. The human right to sanitation requires services to be available, safe, acceptable, accessible and affordable. The former Special Rapporteur defined sanitation as a "system for the collection, transport, treatment and disposal or reuse of human excreta and associated hygiene. States must ensure without discrimination that everyone has physical and economic access to sanitation, in all spheres of life, which is safe, hygienic, secure, socially and culturally acceptable, provides privacy and ensures dignity" (see A/HRC/12/24, para. 63).

6. Beyond an individual's access to a latrine or toilet, sanitation also has an important public health dimension. Adequate sanitation not only guarantees an individual's access, but also protects the human rights of others, including their rights to life, health, water and a healthy environment, by ensuring that the environment in which they live is not contaminated with faeces (see A/68/264).

1. Availability

7. A sufficient number of sanitation facilities has to be available. The necessary structures also have to be put in place to ensure the availability of services, such as policies programmes, institutions and sufficient personnel able to construct, maintain and manage the delivery of services.

2. Accessibility

8. Sanitation facilities must be physically accessible for everyone within or in the immediate vicinity of each household, health or educational institution, public institutions and places, and the workplace (see A/HRC/12/24, para. 75). Sanitation facilities should be designed in a way that enables all users to physically access and use them, including, especially those with special access needs, such as children, persons with disabilities, elderly persons, pregnant women, parents accompanying children, chronically ill people and those accompanying them. Considering the needs of these individuals has implications for the entrance size, the interior space, handrails or other support mechanisms and the position of defecation, as well as other aspects.

9. Human rights require that where sanitation facilities are shared, including at the work place or health and other public institutions, there be a sufficient number of sanitation facilities with associated services to ensure that waiting times are not unreasonably long. Sanitation facilities must be reliably accessible to satisfy all needs throughout day and night, whether at home, the workplace or in public institutions.

10. Where the sanitation facility is not located on the premises, the path leading to it should be secure and convenient for all users. The risk of attack or assault from animals or people, particularly for women and children, must be minimized. Public or shared latrines in residential areas must be safely accessible in the night, as well

as in the day. Any form of sanitation for domestic use that is situated outside the premises should only be a short-term measure. Focussed efforts must be made to replace these with adequate sanitation within the premises.

3. Quality and safety

11. Human rights require that sanitation facilities must be hygienically safe to use and easy to clean and maintain. They must effectively prevent human and animal, including insect, contact with human excreta to avert the spread of disease. Manual emptying of pit latrines or septic tanks should be avoided as it is considered unsafe (as well as culturally unacceptable in many places, which may lead to the stigmatization of those burdened with this task), meaning that mechanized alternatives that effectively prevent direct contact with human excreta should be used. Regular cleaning, emptying of pits or other places that collect human excreta and maintenance are essential for ensuring the sustainability of sanitation facilities and continued access. Sanitation facilities must also be technically safe to use, which means that the superstructure is stable and the floor and hole to the pit are designed in a way that reduces the risk of accidents.

4. Affordability

12. Use of sanitation facilities and services must be available at a price that is affordable to all people (see A/HRC/30/39). This must include all associated costs, ranging from regular tariffs to connection fees in the case of networked provision, to costs of on-site solutions such as the construction or maintenance of pit latrines and septic tanks. There are often costs that go unrecognized when planning for technical solutions. For example, on-site technologies may require regular maintenance, including the emptying of pits or septic tanks and the sludge management. Sanitation based on a flush toilet generally requires payment for additional quantities of water. Paying for these services must not limit people's capacity to acquire other basic goods and services guaranteed by human rights, such as the right to food, housing, health and education. Affordability does not necessarily require services to be provided free of charge. People are generally expected to contribute according to their means. However, when people are unable, for reasons beyond their control, to access sanitation through their own means, the State is obliged to find solutions for ensuring their access to sanitation free of charge.

5. Acceptability, privacy and dignity

13. Sanitation facilities and services must be culturally acceptable. Personal sanitation is a highly sensitive issue across regions and cultures and differing perspectives about which sanitation solutions are acceptable must be taken into account regarding the design, positioning and conditions for use of sanitation facilities. In most cultures, toilets must be constructed so as to ensure privacy and dignity. Acceptability often requires separate facilities for women and men in public places, and for girls and boys in schools.

B. Human rights standards for water

14. The human right to water requires services to be available, safe, acceptable, accessible and affordable.

1. Availability

15. Availability refers to the quantity of safe water available for domestic and personal use, and the necessary protection of water resources. There must be a sufficient quantity of water available to fulfil individuals' and households' requirements for drinking and personal hygiene, for personal and domestic uses, which includes cooking, preparation of food, laundry and cleaning (see E/C.12/2002/11, para. 12). As individual household needs vary depending on circumstance and context, including age, occupation, ill-health and climatic conditions, an exact quantity necessary to fulfil the above requirements cannot be given. The World Health Organization (WHO) provides broad guidance on the relevant amounts of water to promote good hygiene and protect public health,[1] but each State must assess the relevant amount for given circumstances. Beyond this, availability also relates to the necessary structures to ensure service provision.

2. Accessibility

16. Water must be accessible in the household or its immediate vicinity, as well as at other places where an individual spends significant amounts of time, including at the workplace, in schools, health centres and detention centres. To achieve an adequate standard of living, gain full health benefits and ensure that the time spent collecting water is minimal, everyone should have access to a tap in the home. In those cases where water is not accessible on the premises, the route to fetch water and the facility itself must be safe for all users, and the method of extracting water must be usable by all. Further, the supply must be reliable and continuous, so that individuals can collect water at the times that they require.[2]

3. Quality

17. The water used by households and individuals for domestic and personal uses must be of sufficient quality to protect their health (see E/C.12/2002/11, para. 12). Pollution of water by any means, including by agriculture, industry and wastewater must therefore be prevented. WHO has published guidelines for drinking water quality, which define relevant limits for a wide range of potentially harmful substances to prevent "significant risk to health over a lifetime of consumption".[3]

4. Affordability

18. Water must be affordable to individuals for all personal and domestic uses (see A/HRC/30/39). In considering the affordability of water services, States must consider all aspects of access, including tariffs, connection charges, storage and household treatment of water, where necessary. The amount paid for water must not prevent people from accessing other essential goods and services that are guaranteed by other human rights, such as medicines, rent, other-related housing fees and education fees. Water does not have to be available for free other than in situations where people are not able to pay for the service themselves.

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[1] See Guy Howard and Jamie Bartram, *Domestic Water Quantity, Service, Level and Health*, World Health Organization (2003).

[2] This issue also links to quality, as household water storage bears risks in terms of water quality and health.

[3] World Health Organization, *Guidelines for Drinking Water Quality*, 4th ed. (Geneva, World Health Organization, 2011).

5. Acceptability

19. Water must be of an acceptable colour, odour and taste, beyond the issues of quality mentioned above (see E/C.12/2002/11, para. 12).

C. Human rights standards for hygiene

20. Certain human rights obligations related to hygiene can be inferred from the rights to water and sanitation, as well as the right to health, the right to food, the right to privacy, human dignity and other human rights. This report focuses on the human rights obligations related to hand-washing at appropriate times, menstrual hygiene, management of child faeces and domestic food hygiene. A working group created under WHO and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation explained that "... various components are considered essential to menstrual hygiene management. The first is that women and adolescent girls use clean materials to absorb or collect menstrual blood, and are able to change them in privacy as often as necessary for the duration of their menstrual period. It also involves using soap and water for washing the body as required, and having access to safe and convenient facilities to dispose of used menstrual management materials. Further, women and girls need access to basic information about the menstrual cycle and how to manage it with dignity and without discomfort or fear."[4]

1. Availability

21. Facilities to meet hygiene requirements must be available wherever there are toilets or latrines, where water is stored and where food is prepared and served. These are required particularly for hand-washing, menstrual hygiene, the management of children's faeces and the preparation and consumption of food and drink.

2. Accessibility

22. Hygiene facilities must be physically accessible for everyone within or in the immediate vicinity of each household, health or educational institution, public institutions and places, and the workplace. Ideally, they should be located adjacent to toilets. Women, persons with disabilities, children and others may have particular hygiene requirements. Access to hygiene facilities should be secure and convenient for all users, including children, elderly persons, persons with disabilities, women, including pregnant women, and chronically ill people. Moreover, hygiene facilities need to be accessible on a reliable and continuous basis, at home, work and school, and in public places, as to satisfy all needs throughout the day.

3. Quality and safety

23. Hygiene facilities, such as hand-washing stations or disposal units for sanitary products, must be safe to use and easy to clean. Sanitation facilities must ensure

[4] See WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation, "WASH Post-2015: proposed targets and indicators for drinking-water, sanitation and hygiene", fact sheet, available from www.wssinfo.org/fileadmin/user_upload/resources/post-2015-WASH-targets-factsheet-12pp.pdf.

access to safe water for hand washing, menstrual hygiene, and anal and genital cleansing. They must also include mechanisms for the hygienic disposal of menstrual products and nappies. Good hygiene practices require hygiene promotion and education to ensure good hand-washing, proper use of toilets and menstrual hygiene, encouraging individuals to prepare and consume food in a hygienic manner that respects the safety and well-being of others.

4. Affordability

24. Use of hygiene facilities and services must be available at a price that is affordable to all people. The main costs, other than for installation, are associated with supplying water, soap and cleaning products for hand-washing, food hygiene, home hygiene and washing clothes, and for sanitary napkins or other products required for menstrual hygiene. Paying for these services must not limit people's capacity to acquire other basic goods and services guaranteed by human rights, such as food, housing, health services and education. Assistance should be provided to households or individuals who are unable to afford soap and cleaning products, or sanitary products for women and girls.

5. Acceptability, privacy and dignity

25. Hygiene facilities and services must be culturally acceptable. Personal hygiene is a highly sensitive issue across regions and cultures. Differing perspectives on the acceptability of hygiene practices must be taken into account regarding the design, positioning and conditions of use for sanitation, hand-washing and menstrual hygiene facilities. Facilities should accommodate hygiene practices in specific cultures, such as anal and genital cleansing, and women's toilets must accommodate menstruation hygiene management needs, particularly with respect to privacy. Menstruation is taboo in many countries, which makes menstrual hygiene a major concern for the health and well-being of women, and particularly of girls, who may not have sufficient knowledge about managing menstruation to be able to develop good practices. Education is necessary at schools, for boys as well as girls, to start to address the social taboos associated with menstruation and menstrual hygiene.

D. Human rights principles

26. Apart from these substantive criteria, human rights principles provide vital guidance on how human rights must be realized and applied to particular types of services.

1. Non-discrimination and substantive equality

27. Equality and non-discrimination are the central tenet of human rights, and are linked under human rights law.[5] For individuals and groups to enjoy full equality, States must take all necessary steps to ensure substantive equality, which means preventing discrimination in both legislation and policies and in practice. The principle of non-discrimination is immediately binding for all levels and entities of a State, in all spheres and at all times.

[5] See A/RES/217 A (III), art. 2; A/RES/2200 A (XXI), annex, art. 2; and E/C.12/GC/20.

28. Achieving equality does not mean that everyone should be treated identically. With respect to water, sanitation and hygiene, human rights requires that everyone has equal access to services; but this does not mean that everyone must enjoy the same type of service, such as flush toilets, as these are not appropriate in all circumstances and contexts. Also some individuals or groups have specific needs such as menstrual hygiene for women and girls. However, States may need to adopt affirmative measures, giving preference to certain groups and individuals in order to redress past discrimination. Social, cultural, economic and political inequalities perpetuate social exclusion, and this needs to be carefully considered in the development of water, sanitation and hygiene service delivery options (see E/C.12/2002/11, para. 17).

2. Participation

29. Participation must be active, free and meaningful to comply with the human rights to water and sanitation. Individuals and communities must be given the opportunity to participate in the choice of the type of service and management model. Participation includes ensuring that people have the opportunity to engage actively, by holding meetings at times and in places where all individuals have access and feel comfortable in giving their opinion. In many cases, language and levels of literacy need to be considered.

30. The Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention), an instrument providing useful guidance on participation even beyond its regional scope, requires that public bodies take due account of the outcome of public participation and notify the public of the decision made, giving reasons and spelling out what was considered in reaching the decision.[6]

31. People must be able to voice their concerns freely. Those who are otherwise discriminated against or stigmatized may have particular difficulties in making their opinion heard as concerns the types of service that are acceptable to them. They must also be given the chance to present their opinions and influence decision-making. For decisions on types of services, women and girls' participation is essential.

3. Access to information

32. Participation in decision-making regarding the type of service is only effective if there is access to sufficient and accurate information, which is in itself a human right. To be able to make informed choices, communities and individuals must have access to adequate information about the different technologies' long-term costs, sustainability and related health and environmental concerns.

33. People need to have access to information:

- For democratic engagement, such as through community councils and participatory budgeting;
- For active, free and meaningful participation in the design of policies and planning on water, sanitation and hygiene-related issues;

[6] See United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 2161, No. 37770, art. 6, para. 9.

- To monitor their representatives and hold them accountable;
- To make decisions about their daily use of water, sanitation and hygiene services.

34. Poor and marginalized individuals and communities are often the passive objects of policymaking, excluded from public debate, unable to participate in political life and prevented from influencing the decisions that have a profound effect on their everyday lives. Access to information helps balance the unequal power dynamic that exists between marginalized individuals and groups and the State and other bodies such as service providers.

4. Accountability

35. States have an obligation to realize the human rights to water and sanitation, and can be held accountable for this. Monitoring is essential to assessing whether States and other actors, including service providers, are complying with the human rights to water and sanitation, and is a prerequisite for holding them to account for violations. This requires monitoring that goes beyond physical services, but also focuses on inequalities in access to services within countries, cities and settlements. Where there are inequalities in access, or the State is not progressively realizing the rights to water and sanitation, using maximum available resources, or otherwise not meeting its human rights obligations, people must be able to gain access to justice. States have an obligation to put appropriate accountability mechanisms in place and to ensure access to the courts as a last resort.

5. Sustainability

36. Human rights law requires that the progressive realization of human rights is achieved in a sustainable manner. Improvements to services and facilities must be maintained such that there is no slippage and retrogression is avoided. In the context of service levels, this demands that services are reliable and continuously functional. Above all, today's services must not limit future generations from accessing water, sanitation and hygiene services. The most appropriate technology must be chosen with due attention to immediate costs (for example, those related to construction), long-term costs (for example, those related to operation and maintenance) and the availability of water and financial resources.

III. Assessment of key types of service through the lens of human rights

37. To facilitate the discussion on the appropriateness of the different types of service, this section discusses technologies, management models and regulatory frameworks for water, sanitation and hygiene. This discussion includes a brief assessment of the characteristics and factors of each type of service that can either favour or hinder their compliance with the human rights to water and sanitation. The context and policy environment in which a particular technology is used strongly influences whether the service complies with human rights standards and principles. This section assesses the relevant factors that are necessary to ensure the realization of the human rights to water and sanitation depending on the type of service by considering how technologies and management models for service provision interact.

38. The present report considers three main types of services:

- Connection to a piped network
- Shared or communal facilities
- Individual on-site solutions.

It also considers four broad categories of management models:

- Utilities (large scale, formal entities that provide predominantly piped water and sanitation systems)
- Small-scale, non-governmental (NGO) or community-run service providers that are recognized or even mandated by the State
- Small-scale, NGO or community-run providers that are not mandated by the State and are largely unregulated
- Self-supply.

39. Any of these systems may be owned and operated by public or private entities, and working for-profit or not-for-profit. These aspects of service management models will not be considered in the report (see A/HRC/15/31).

40. Utilities, as the first category considered, may be managed poorly or well, but they will generally have a formal structure and will be required to meet particular standards in service provision. There will generally be State-mandated or independent oversight of a utility's activities, whether or not this is effective. This includes regulatory bodies, which may set standards and targets and monitor issues such as quality and tariff-setting.

41. In some countries, small-scale-, NGO- or community-managed service providers are part of the formal institutional arrangement for ensuring access to water, sanitation and hygiene. This may be the case particularly in rural areas, where it may not be realistic to deliver piped services to individuals and households in the short term. These small-scale providers are usually recognized by the State and may receive some form of regulatory oversight.

42. In other countries and other contexts, informal providers exist outside of State oversight, often in response to the absence of more formal solutions for adequate services. These providers tend only to be accountable to consumers insofar as the latter are able to choose between existing providers based on the criteria of availability, price and quality of service. Small-scale, NGO or community-managed providers deliver a range of different water, sanitation and hygiene services, including piped supply, shared or public toilet blocks, water vendors, well construction, latrine construction and pit emptying services.

43. The final category of service delivery is self-supply. For sanitation, this is probably the most common form of access in rural areas and in many informal settlements, and is also widespread for households' access to water.

44. Bearing in mind this categorization of different management models, this section of the report discusses different types of services for ensuring access to water, sanitation and hygiene, their links to different management models and oversight capacities that contribute to the realization of the human rights to water and sanitation.

A. Sanitation

1. Connection to a piped network

45. Private household toilets linked to piped sewerage managed by a formal utility are often presented as the gold standard for sanitation. The historical development of sanitation in urban areas in the Global North largely explains the emergence of this technological conception.[7] Institutions such as schools, health-care centres and detention centres will generally be connected to a formal sewerage network where this is available.

46. Piped systems usually ensure accessibility, acceptability and convenience for the user, quality and privacy. The health benefits for those connected to a sewerage network are clear, as faeces and wastewater are transported away from the household in a way that avoids human contact. While the user has to clean the toilet and ensure that the flush mechanism works properly, all other aspects of maintenance and wastewater treatment are the responsibility of someone else. A regulatory framework and standards for piped systems are generally available, while these are not always effectively put in place and monitored.

47. There are, however, concerns from a human rights perspective. The construction of such systems may be technically difficult to install in and around existing buildings and infrastructure where urban settlements have not been adequately planned, such as in most informal settlements. In many developing countries, the sewerage network is only available in middle and high income areas. Leaving residents of low income areas and informal settlements without access to this service often entrenches inequalities.

48. Further, piped systems often raise affordability concerns for the State, the service provider and the user. Even where a sewerage system exists and all residents are physically able to connect to it, including in informal settlements, connection charges may prevent poorer households from making use of this service, unless appropriate systems are in place to ensure affordability.

49. Moreover, a flush toilet with a sewered connection requires considerably more water than other forms of sanitation, which can raise environmental and affordability concerns. Piped sewerage has also faced criticism from an ecological perspective, questioning whether it is the soundest solution to flush away excreta with large amounts of freshwater that become contaminated in the process.

50. Further challenges arise when wastewater management and treatment are neglected. In such instances, the users of toilets linked to networked sewerage systems obtain individual health benefits, but they may inflict negative impacts on others by contaminating the environment in which they live. From a health perspective, one community's sewage is more dangerous to external communities, as it potentially transmits different pathogens.[8] This will infringe people's human rights to water, health and a healthy environment and will also reinforce inequalities.

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[7] José Esteban Castro and Léo Heller, eds., *Water and Sanitation Services: Public Policy and Management* (London, Earthscan, 2009).

[8] See Léo Heller, "Who really benefits from environmental sanitation services in the cities: an intra-urban analysis in Betim, Brazil", *Environment and Urbanization*, vol. 11, No. 1 (1999).

51. An alternative sewerage system (often referred to as simplified, condominial or small-bore sewerage systems, owing to the smaller size of the pipes), can imply more affordable construction costs, but generally transfers its management from the State to the community and requires more user maintenance, which can be problematic in the long term. Small-scale, community-managed service providers may also construct piped sewerage systems. They will often be limited to a small community, providing sewerage service connected to a simplified wastewater treatment plant. While these can be very effective, without appropriate management and regulation there is a risk that the service is not constructed adequately, that the treatment plant is not properly maintained, is not affordable and does not provide a consistent and sustainable service.

2. Communal or shared facilities

52. This category includes public or communal toilet or latrine blocks and latrines privately shared between a few households. These may be managed by a utility, by small-scale or community providers or by the households concerned. Institutions such as schools, healthcare centres and detention centres generally use communal systems in the absence of a sewerage system, and may be either formally or informally provided.

53. Sanitation shared between a few households, where all residents know each other and maintenance and cleaning is shared, is a common form of access in many countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa.[9] This form of access can contribute to the realization of the human rights to water and sanitation, where the construction and maintenance of the toilet or latrine is adequate, and where everyone within the households has access to the toilet or latrine, regardless of their age, physical ability or status within the household. There may be particular concerns for persons with disabilities, children, older persons, people with a chronic illness (which may be stigmatized, such as HIV), renters or those who do not belong to the main household. In some cultures, menstruating women are not allowed to use a latrine shared by other people, and this problem may be compounded when the latrine is shared by several households (see A/67/270, para. 73).

54. Public or communal latrines are less likely to be well-managed than privately shared latrines. They also tend to be located at a greater distance from the home, raising concerns in terms of quality, hygiene and accessibility. One particular drawback of a communal service is a lack of privacy and an increased risk of violence or assault for people leaving the house, particularly at night. Women and children are particularly at risk of violence in such conditions. Challenges also exist in terms of ensuring hygiene in these types of facilities, in assigning responsibilities for operation, maintenance and cleaning and hence to ensure their sustainability.

55. Communal or shared sanitation options, especially between many households, should never be seen as an adequate long-term solution. However, in some contexts, they are a short- to medium-term solution, necessary owing to limited urban planning and insufficient resources. Where communal or shared latrines are used, States should take measures to ensure privacy, safety and hygiene, affordability and sustainability. They should also ensure that there is a plan with set targets to upgrade this form of sanitation to options that comply fully with the right to

[9] See Thilde Rheinländer et al., "Redefining shared sanitation", *Bulletin of World Health Organization*, Vol. 93 (2015).

sanitation within a fixed time-frame. Without this long-term commitment and planning, solutions that are considered to be short-term often end up being long-term solutions. Without suitable regulation, none of these services can be guaranteed to comply with human rights, for quality, affordability, safety or acceptability.

3. Individual on-site solutions

56. Individual households have various options for sanitation provision, many of which meet human rights standards in different contexts and circumstances, depending, among other aspects, on user engagement. These include pit latrines, ventilated improved pit latrines, septic tanks and different types of ecological sanitation, which are often based on the separation of faeces and urine, on limiting water use, and on the reuse of waste matter. Some options, such as hanging latrines and "flying toilets", are not acceptable under any circumstances, as they do not ensure safety and contribute to the contamination of the environment.

57. In rural areas, for example, pit latrines may be acceptable if they are well-constructed and emptied as necessary, or filled in and rebuilt elsewhere. Problems arise where these types of latrines are not well built, or risk contaminating the water table. Hygiene concerns will arise if these latrines are not regularly cleaned, which may be difficult where latrine slabs are poorly constructed.

58. In some countries, individual solutions are regulated by a State institution. For example, such regulatory bodies may define the necessary dimensions of a septic tank, the requirements for the construction of a pit or the minimum distance of a latrine from a water source or a water table to avoid contamination.

59. Even low-cost on-site solutions may still be unaffordable for people living in poverty, particularly owing to the associated maintenance costs such as pit-emptying. For those populations living on very low incomes, household-level latrines may be inadequate or unaffordable unless significant technical and financial support is provided. While there has been considerable debate about sanitation marketing techniques to encourage people to invest in sanitation, the reality is that without subsidies, many of these on-site solutions are not affordable for households facing extreme poverty.

60. As long as on-site sanitation facilities are constructed, maintained and managed according to human rights standards and principles, there is no dichotomy between human rights and self-supply. However, some of these solutions may be inadequate, especially in terms of cleaning, maintenance and sludge management, which can have strong negative impacts on human health and the environment. In some countries, the State may not recognize its obligation to ensure that self-supply solutions comply with human rights obligations and are appropriate and affordable. States need to put appropriate systems in place, including regulation and financial support for those who need it.

B. Water

1. Connection to a piped network

61. Treated water piped into the home is usually presented as the gold standard for access to water. Its emergence is also largely explained by the historical

development of water supply in urban areas in the Global North.[7] Institutions such as schools, health-care centres and detention centres are generally connected to a piped supply where this is available. Where water is provided by a formal service provider, it is expected that there will be standards and targets set, which can be regulated by an independent regulatory body. This is an essential aspect of formal service provision, even though effective implementation in practice is often lacking.

62. Clean and safe water available within the home will ensure the household's access to sufficient quantities of safe water resulting in optimal health outcomes and significant time savings in water collection times. It also eliminates the need for transportation and the risk of unsafe storage, reducing the risk of contamination of water supply and limiting the need for household water treatment.[10] Water piped into the home is more likely to be reliable and continuous compared to other delivery options.

63. Problems often arise with piped water supplies in terms of quality (where the water is not adequately treated) or with continuity, where limited water availability leads to rationing of water supplies. All too often, rationing will take place in poorer areas rather than in well-to-do areas. This creates a double inequality, as poorer households often lack the necessary resources to adequately store water, or find an acceptable alternative supply. A lack of continuity also puts the quality of the water at risk by increasing the chance of contaminated water entering the system. Where piped water is not safe to use, households must rely on household water treatment, which can be costly and may still be unsafe.

64. Piped services are often not available to rural households or to those living in informal settlements in urban areas. This represents a significant problem of inequality in access, as marginalized or disadvantaged people are generally excluded from accessing this type of service and rely on alternatives that are often of lower quality and accessibility and tend to cost more. Increasing the number of households with access to piped water within the home must be carefully planned, as this type of access invariably means that households will use more water than they will have used previously with a water source outside the home and measures need to be taken to ensure availability and affordability.

65. Environmental sustainability is a concern where there is not an adequate sanitation system to remove the water that is brought into a household. In urban areas, in particular, this can be a problem when water is piped into a settlement without adequate removal systems. Beyond the pollution of water bodies and the consequent impacts on health, stagnant and standing water can encourage the breeding of mosquitoes, including those responsible for spreading malaria, dengue and yellow fever.

2. Shared or communal water facilities

66. Technologies for shared or communal water provision may include water kiosks, standpipes, boreholes and wells often based in a settlement or village. These may be managed by a utility or by small-scale or community-run providers. Institutions such as schools, health-care centres and detention centres in settlements

[10] See UNICEF and WHO, *Progress on Sanitation and Drinking Water, 2015 Update and MDG Assessment*, in which multiple case studies demonstrated that "piped water supplies are generally less likely to be contaminated than other improved sources".

or areas without access to a piped supply may use a borehole or well that is available for their own use or for the use of the broader community, particularly where such a settlement does not have another reliable source of water.

67. Whether or not this type of service meets human rights criteria standards depends on multiple factors. Particular issues to consider are water quality, price, distance from the home, waiting times (where there are a number of households using the same source) and the appropriate transport to and storage within the home. Depending on the position of the facility relative to the home, households may not be able to collect the optimum amount of water to ensure good health. Even where water is safe at source, the transport of water to the home, and storage within the home may not be safe, and the necessary water treatment can be prohibitively expensive for households living in poverty. Further, there is seldom any assistance for using household water treatment methods to ensure that they are reliable, safe and sustainable. Similarly, they often do not have regular access to the necessary materials (for example, chlorine). Prices for water supplies may rise and fall according to water availability, putting the price of water out of reach for households on low-incomes in times of water scarcity.

68. Thus, while these informal shared or communal services may be providing service to millions of households, these services should be seen merely as interim solutions. States must adopt measures to either appropriately regulate them or replace them with systems that can be regulated and that meet the human rights standards. Where a State takes steps to provide formal service to areas formerly serviced only by informal providers, it is important that it ensures the affordability of formal services for the users in question.

3. Individual on-site solutions

69. Households may also have their own water supply from a private well or borehole. Private wells may not provide a regular or year-round supply of water, with seasonal dry periods being problematic in some regions. To ensure water quality, wells must be protected from animals and other sources of contamination. Wells in high-density urban areas are often at great risk of contamination. In some instances, a household will sell water to neighbours. Although this may be safe in some rural areas, there is seldom any regulation of water quality or affordability, or of construction and maintenance.

70. Rainwater harvesting is also a common household (or shared) solution. Again there can be issues with household water treatment and storage, and continuity of supply in areas with variable rain. Rainwater harvesting can be particularly useful as an additional source of water to complement other forms of supply. Other types of self-supply, such as the collection of surface water, seldom meet the standards and principles of the human rights to water and sanitation.

71. The category of individual on-site solutions also includes the provision of a household-level service by a well or borehole provided by a small-scale provider. Particular issues to consider include monitoring the proper construction, operation and maintenance of the borehole or well, in order to ensure that it is sustainable in terms of both technology and management.

C. Hygiene

72. Hygiene practices include hand-washing, personal hygiene, domestic hygiene, hygienic use and management of toilets or latrines, the hygienic disposal of child faeces, menstrual hygiene and food hygiene.

73. Hand-washing is often seen as the key aspect of hygiene. It requires both adequate quantities of water at necessary places (in the kitchen and bathroom) and critical times (after using the toilet, before preparing food and before eating), as well as soap (or an alternative, such as ash). In many households, both of these resources may be in short supply, for accessibility or affordability reasons. A typical example of a hand-washing station is a tap connected to piped water, but there are also other solutions, such as the "tippy tap", that are at least acceptable as an interim solution. As with all water use, it is essential that there be an adequate wastewater disposal system to prevent the local (and in some cases broader) environment from being flooded with excess water.

74. Many cultures use water for genital and anal cleansing, and again require sufficient quantities of water at the point of use. Water and cleaning materials are also required for keeping the toilet and surrounding area clean. Cleaning materials and disposal facilities are also necessary for managing child faeces hygienically.

75. Considerations of menstrual hygiene are particularly important for issues related to health, education and gender equality.[11] Facilities for menstrual hygiene management must include a system of disposal of sanitary materials and a place for washing reusable materials. Systems should be designed with the participation of users to make sure that they are relevant, appropriate and not liable to increase the stigmatization of girls and women during their periods. Cultural acceptability is essential to determine the type of technology used.

76. Generally, all of these services are provided through a household's own initiative, or through the initiative of the relevant institution. Where this is a State institution, whether a school, health centre or place of detention, there should be independent oversight to ensure that these services are adequate. Places where women are detained must ensure that women have access to the necessary facilities and materials for menstrual hygiene management.

IV. Progressive realization

A. Achieving universal access

77. The human rights criteria of availability, safety, acceptability, accessibility and affordability provide a standard against which solutions for water, sanitation and hygiene can be assessed. They stipulate the standard to be achieved. By themselves, however, they cannot be used to assess whether States are meeting their human rights obligations. The solutions proposed by the State need to be assessed contextually, with particular consideration of the resources available.

[11] Inga Winkler and Virginia Roaf, "Taking the bloody linen out of the closet: menstrual hygiene as a priority for achieving gender equality", *Cardozo Journal of Law and Gender*, vol. 21, No. 1 (2015).

78. In principle, States are obliged to progressively realize economic, social and cultural rights, although there are some immediate obligations, such as non-discrimination. The human rights framework acknowledges that the full realization of economic, social and cultural rights takes time in many States. However, States have to move towards the goal of full realization as expeditiously and efficiently as possible. Where they have the capacity to realize the human rights to water and sanitation in full, they have an obligation to do so. All States must undertake deliberate, targeted and concrete steps to that end. The concept of progressive realization does not leave the realization of human rights to the States' discretion. It is qualified by an obligation to devote the maximum of available resources towards the realization of human rights. While difficult to measure in concrete terms, the principle of using the maximum available resources sets an objective standard for compliance with human rights obligations.

79. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights relies on the standard of reasonableness and has developed criteria to assess whether the measures taken by States are reasonable, including:

> "(a) The extent to which the measures taken were deliberate, concrete and targeted towards the fulfilment of economic, social and cultural rights;
>
> (b) Whether the State party exercised its discretion in a non-discriminatory and non-arbitrary manner;
>
> (c) Whether the steps had taken into account the precarious situation of disadvantaged and marginalized individuals or groups and, whether they were non-discriminatory, and whether they prioritized grave situations or situations of risk" (see E/C.12/2007/1, para. 8).

80. Progressive realization has two components: progressively moving towards universal access by reaching more people and progressively moving towards better levels of service that fully meet human rights standards. Human rights do not include minimum standards such as access to a latrine at a particular distance from the home or a minimum essential amount of water. The human rights to water and sanitation must ensure an adequate standard of living, which could, for instance, require a latrine or toilet on the premises and an adequate quantity of water supplied within the home. With regard to hygiene, human rights also do not include minimum standards such as a "tippy-tap" in a household's back yard. The requirement of an adequate standard of living may include a tap within the home for hand-washing, as well as adequate facilities to practice menstrual hygiene. States that have already achieved an essential level of service have to move beyond this in order to ensure the full realization of the human rights to sanitation and water.

81. Given these sometimes competing requirements of reaching more people and achieving a level of service that fully meets human rights standards, the crucial question for States is how to set priorities for the realization of human rights. The human rights framework does not provide any definitive answers to questions of prioritization, as they need to be answered in each particular context. However, it does provide guidance on the basis of human rights concepts, in particular the obligation to target and prioritize the most disadvantaged in order to achieve substantive equality.

B. Targeting and prioritizing the most disadvantaged individuals and groups

82. Non-discrimination prohibits discriminatory treatment and discriminatory impact. Achieving substantive equality in the enjoyment of the human rights to water and sanitation is not just formal equality but actual equality in practice. It is not sufficient for States not to discriminate against certain groups or individuals, but States must take positive measures to include everyone and to redress past disadvantage and reverse patterns of inequalities. Accordingly, equality and non-discrimination have important implications for priority-setting.

83. Such targeting and prioritizing requires States to take differences into account rather than treating equally what is unequal. Treating people who are unequal the same does not achieve equality, but instead reinforces disadvantage. For persons with disabilities, article 5, paragraph 3, of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities explicitly requires States to "take all appropriate steps to ensure that reasonable accommodation is provided". Where States adopt temporary special measures or affirmative action to achieve such prioritization and target disadvantaged groups and individuals, this is not discrimination, but rather a means to achieve substantive equality by redistributing power and resources.

84. Therefore, the key question to ask in order to achieve an equitable redistribution and to set priorities in policy-making and resource allocation is: who has been and who is being disadvantaged? Undertaking this analysis through the lens of equality and non-discrimination will demonstrate that the unserved and underserved are not randomly distributed. It will often point to communities in informal settlements, especially those that do not have security of tenure, as well as in remote rural areas. It will expose entrenched gender inequalities and the disadvantages and barriers faced by persons with disabilities, older persons and chronically ill people. It will point to patterns of neglect in service provision for communities that belong predominantly to indigenous peoples or ethnic minorities. It will bring discrimination on the basis of language, caste or religion to the fore.

85. Substantive equality requires prioritizing the provision of services to these groups and individuals who have been disadvantaged. Such redistribution is most obvious in relation to (material) resources and benefits, such as provision of water, sanitation and hygiene services. However, disadvantages and the necessary (re)distribution extend to the underlying structural factors, such as decision-making power, and the ability to make and exercise choices. Generally, a failure on the part of the State to ensure that the human rights to water and sanitation are met is also indicative of other failures, such as discrimination and inequalities in access to housing, health, food and education.

86. The obligation to target the most disadvantaged in order to achieve substantive equality provides a powerful tool for prioritization in policy-making, resource allocation and service provision. This prioritization is reinforced by the concept of core obligations used by the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. It requires States to ensure the realization of an essential level of the human rights to water and sanitation as a matter of priority (see E/C.2/2002/11, para. 37 and E/1991/23-E/C.12/1990/8, annex III). Hence States' actions have to prioritize service provision to the unserved and underserved. Where parts of the population do not even have access to an essential level of service, States must prioritize this.

When everyone has access to at least an essential level of service, States have the obligation to progressively realize the human rights to water and sanitation in order to achieve an adequate standard of living for all.

87. The strength of the human rights framework lies in combining the priority on achieving an essential level of service for all with the concept of progressively improving services together with the framework of substantive equality. Assessing who is unserved or underserved through the lens of non-discrimination and equality demands policymakers to address the structural causes for which many people have been disadvantaged through comprehensive measures.

C. Addressing practical challenges in prioritization

88. The human rights framework is very clear in stating that States must not allow their investment strategies to favour better-off neighbourhoods over more disadvantaged communities. In many instances, disadvantaged communities that do not even enjoy an essential level of water, sanitation and hygiene services have needs that must be met immediately. Meeting these immediate needs may require more basic solutions at initial stages, even if that implies a second investment later to upgrade these services. However, such planning decisions must take great care for double investments to not represent an irresponsible use of public funds and a possible compromise of other human rights. The human rights framework does not allow States to ignore the immediate needs with promises of a long-term strategy that will eventually reach the entire population, including the most marginalized and disadvantaged individuals and communities. The human rights framework conveys an urgency to meet and prioritize these needs. In a judgement on the right to housing and related socioeconomic rights, including water and sanitation, the South African Constitutional Court articulated that the Government must adopt programmes that are balanced and flexible, and take account of short-, medium- and long-term needs.[12] In balancing these requirements, States must not neglect the parts of the population whose needs are most urgent, but must take these needs into account immediately, and must ensure that a significant number of people in desperate need are afforded relief.[13]

89. All too often, the immediate needs of those who lack access to even basic services lose out over improvements in service for those who already enjoy an essential level of service. The most recent report by WHO and UN-Water finds that funding for basic services is even decreasing and only 21 per cent of water and sanitation aid is directed to basic systems, while overall aid to the sector is increasing.[14] Investing in basic systems can be seen as a proxy for reaching unserved populations. The human rights framework demands that States reverse these trends and put greater emphasis on achieving at least essential levels of service for everyone, while keeping in mind that the goal must be to achieve an

[12] Constitutional Court of South Africa, *Government of the Republic of South Africa and Others v. Grootboom and Others*, 2000 (11) BCLR 1169 (CC), para 43.

[13] Ibid., para. 68.

[14] World Health Organization and UN-Water, *Investing in Water and Sanitation: Increasing Access, Reducing Inequalities — UN-Water Global Analysis and Assessment of Sanitation and Drinking-Water (GLAAS) 2014 Report* (Geneva, 2014).

adequate standard of living for everyone, using the maximum available resources efficiently to achieve that goal.

90. In many instances investments in improved levels of service, such as piped water and sewerage, have only reached the relatively well-off. Some States may not have sufficient resources to build the necessary infrastructure at a scale that would ensure universal access. However, in some cases, the extension of piped systems to city-wide coverage can be achieved over time with appropriate legislation, planning and financial management.

91. How States balance these obligations, the solutions they adopt and how they reconcile meeting immediate needs with a long-term strategy of achieving an adequate standard of living depends on the context in each country, region and community. States must address these challenges through comprehensive planning, both for the short and the long term.

92. Any decisions on the adoption of certain technologies, types of services, management models and the prioritization between different measures must be taken on the basis of active, free and meaningful participation of all those concerned. South African courts have developed the concept of "meaningful engagement", which stipulates requirements for the process of decision-making. In the context of sanitation services, a court ruled that meaningful engagement requires consultation with authorized representatives following the sharing of information and technical support, where necessary.[15] It also voiced concern that a majority within a community cannot approve arrangements in terms of which the fundamental rights of a vulnerable minority within that community will be violated.[16] In doing so, the Court highlighted the essential role of inclusion in participatory processes to avoid that the process is captured by the elite, better-off, majority group (see A/69/213).

V. Implications for monitoring

93. Monitoring can play an important role in assessing whether States meet their human rights obligations. The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights uses the concepts of core obligations and reasonableness to assess whether States comply with their human rights obligations. Human rights monitoring can provide detailed, contextualized analysis, using both qualitative and quantitative data. Indicators developed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights provide significant guidance for this process. Sectoral water, sanitation and hygiene monitoring in the context of development cannot fully monitor the progressive realization of the human rights to water and sanitation. Yet, it can provide useful tools that support human rights monitoring.

94. The WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme, particularly as it expands to monitor the sustainable development goals, is a useful tool for monitoring some of the aspects of service provision and relevant human rights criteria, including the combination between types of services and normative contents such as availability, quality, safety, accessibility, affordability and privacy. An important development

[15] Western Cape High Court of South Africa, Cape Town, *Beja and others v. Premier of the Western Cape (21332/10)*, judgement of 29 April 2011, para. 98.

[16] Ibid., para. 99.

will be the monitoring of inequalities, which will monitor access to services by disadvantaged groups compared to more advantaged groups. It should consider different dimensions of inequalities (for example, types of services, quality, affordability) and different comparison groups (for example, urban vs. rural, levels of wealth, gender, disability and ethnicity and other grounds). The proposed sustainable development goal 10 demands the monitoring of inequalities, which could be integrated into monitoring for access to water, sanitation and hygiene.

95. In parallel, WHO and UN-Water monitor resources that flow into the sector and legislation, policies and regulatory frameworks that have been adopted. These assessments provide useful data to identify ways in which States meet their human rights obligations, particularly allowing to follow up the progressive realization of the rights.

96. The Special Rapporteur encourages States to develop more specific monitoring processes, considering the relevant indicators for their specific context. A central tenet of such processes is not only to monitor whether certain benchmarks have been met and reward States for meeting these targets, but also to measure the progress States make. Such a measurement would acknowledge that States have very different starting points and baselines for achieving universal access to water and sanitation. Looking at the Millennium Development Goals, they did not reward progress in countries that started from a very low baseline, even if their efforts were tremendous. Ethiopia, for example, improved access to sanitation from 3 per cent in 1990 to 21 per cent in 2010, thus making significant progress, but falling short of the Millennium Development Goals target.[17] One shortcoming of the Millennium Development Goals measure is that such progress is not acknowledged, and monitoring fails to give justice to the concept of the progressive realization of human rights. The Special Rapporteur encourages States to develop models that can associate a given type of service with the realization of the rights to water and sanitation, while carefully taking into consideration the context in which it is applied.

97. In the context of the sustainable development goals, for future review and follow-up, the Special Rapporteur encourages States to use and adapt existing platforms or partnerships for accountability. This may include using the universal periodic review in the Human Rights Council as a model. Such a platform should establish a country-led review process, which includes international and civil society organizations, and assesses progress and bottlenecks.

VI. Conclusion and recommendations

98. **In conclusion, this report indicates the relevance of the discussion of types of services to the realization of the human rights to water and sanitation. While the relationship between any particular technological option and its performance is largely dependent on the management model that accompanies it and the context within which it is carried out, the type of service used may, in and of itself, weigh on the realization of these rights. A vital message to retain is that the selection of type of service and management model for a given**

[17] See WHO/UNICEF Joint Monitoring Programme for Water Supply and Sanitation country reports, available from: www.wssinfo.org/documents/?tx_displaycontroller[type]=country_files.

location's water, sanitation and hygiene services must be assessed in the light of the human rights standards and principles, as well as the principles of core obligations, progressive realization and use of maximum available resources.

99. **The Special Rapporteur recommends that States:**

(a) **Use the human rights framework for water, sanitation and hygiene to identify appropriate types of services and to ensure that services are available, safe, acceptable, accessible and affordable to all;**

(b) **Take into account the different concerns as to meeting human rights standards related to each type of service in planning and implementation processes. It is important for States to consider that some combinations of types of services and management models may be not compliant and might even provide outcomes far from human rights standards;**

(c) **Take into account the social, economic, political, cultural and environmental context in assessing the compliance of types of services with human rights;**

(d) **Ensure active, free and meaningful participation in the decision-making on adopting types of services and management models;**

(e) **Set priorities in a way to meet the most essential needs to ensure survival, health and dignity, considering the short-, medium- and long-term planning;**

(f) **Focus on the unserved and underserved as a matter of priority. Where parts of the population do not even have access to an essential level of service, States must prioritize the realization of their human rights. When everyone has access to at least an essential level of service, States have the obligation to progressively realize the human rights to water and sanitation in order to achieve an adequate standard of living for all;**

(g) **Prioritize groups and individuals who have been disadvantaged in the past in order to achieve substantive equality and to redress past disadvantage;**

(h) **Balance short-, medium- and long-term needs and address these through comprehensive planning. This implies not deferring immediate needs with promises of a long-term strategy that will eventually reach the entire population. Immediate needs must be addressed as a matter of priority, while minimizing the cost of any potential double investment in infrastructure;**

(i) **Develop monitoring systems to measure the progress States make, acknowledging that States have different starting points and baselines for achieving universal access to water, sanitation and hygiene, as well as to monitor the progressive reduction of inequalities;**

(j) **Use and adapt, as necessary, existing platforms or partnerships so as to ensure the accountability, future review and follow-up of the water-, sanitation- and hygiene-related sustainable development goal targets. Such a platform should establish a country-led review process that includes international and civil society organizations, and assesses progress and bottlenecks.**

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Advancement of women

Improvement of the situation of women in rural areas

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 68/139, the present report reviews the activities undertaken by Member States and United Nations entities with particular focus on enabling the well-being of rural women, especially the poorest and most marginalized, through: (a) ensuring effective, sustainable and gender-responsive agricultural and rural development; (b) recognizing and redistributing rural women's unpaid care work; (c) promoting rural women's employment, decent work, and social protection; (d) ensuring rural women's access to land and productive resources; and (e) increasing rural women's food and nutrition security. This is of great relevance to the implementation of the proposed sustainable development goals, in particular the goal to end poverty in all its forms everywhere; to end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture; and to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls (A/68/970). Recommendations are provided for consideration by the General Assembly.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 68/139 on the improvement of the situation of women in rural areas, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to report to it at its seventieth session on the implementation of the resolution. In response to that request, the present report provides an assessment of the situation of rural women since the sixty-eighth session. It highlights the efforts of Member States, the United Nations system and other actors to address the obstacles and challenges that impede progress towards the economic empowerment of rural women, especially the poorest and most marginalized, and to enable them to improve their lives and livelihoods by: (a) ensuring effective, sustainable and gender-responsive agricultural and rural development; (b) recognizing and redistributing rural women's unpaid care work; (c) promoting rural women's employment, decent work, and social protection; (d) ensuring rural women's access to land and productive resources; and (e) increasing rural women's food and nutrition security. The report concludes with recommendations for consideration by the Assembly.[1]

2. It is now widely acknowledged that rural women play a critical role in supporting their households in the achievement of food and nutrition security, in improving rural livelihoods and in generating income and overall well-being. Rural women account for a substantial proportion of the agricultural labour force, perform most of the unpaid care work and are significant actors in food production as well as in the agricultural, forestry, fisheries, and livestock sectors.[2] Yet, rural women fare worse than rural men and urban women and men for every Millennium Development Goal indicator for which data are available (E/CN.6/2014/3).

3. Despite attaining the Millennium Development Goal 1 target of reducing extreme poverty rates by half five years ahead of the 2015 deadline, 1.2 billion people continue living in extreme poverty.[3] Even if accounting for trends towards urbanization,[4] conditions of extreme poverty are largely a rural phenomenon. Extreme poverty remains unevenly distributed across rural and urban areas, between men and women, and across ages and ethnicities, but evidence suggests that extreme poverty affects many women in rural areas, a group that makes up a fourth of the world's population.[5] However, the lack of data on women's poverty and hunger limits the analysis.[6]

4. With regard to other Millennium Development Goals, rural women are at a definite disadvantage. Developing countries have achieved gender parity in primary

[1] A note verbale was circulated to all Member States and a letter was transmitted to United Nations entities soliciting contributions to the present report. Replies were received from 18 Member States (Australia, Azerbaijan, Botswana, Cambodia, China, Cuba, Djibouti, Egypt, Finland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Paraguay, Philippines, Republic of Korea, Sweden and the United States of America) and from two United Nations agencies (the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Food Programme, whose contributions have been incorporated into the report).

[2] Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), *The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-2011: Women in Agriculture — Closing the Gender Gap for Development* (Rome, 2011).

[3] Available from http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/poverty.shtml (accessed 27 June 2015).

[4] United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *World Urbanization Prospects: The 2014 Revision* (New York, 2014).

[5] International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), *Rural Poverty Report 2011* (Rome, 2010).

[6] Millennium Development Goals Gender Chart (United Nations, 2014).

education enrolment, but much remains to be done to reach universal primary completion: the time lag between boys in urban areas and girls in rural areas is projected to be long, for example, 39 years in the Lao People's Democratic Republic, 46 years in Yemen, 52 years in Ethiopia and 64 years in Guinea.[7] Child marriage, which affects primarily girls, is also associated with low levels of education. Across all regions, girls in rural areas are more likely than those in urban areas to become child brides, and those in the poorest quintile are 2.5 times more likely to do so compared with the wealthiest quintile.[8]

5. Maternal deaths, which are largely preventable, are linked to inadequate health services for women, particularly in rural areas. Distance from health facilities is a major barrier for rural women. In the least developed countries, a rural woman is 38 per cent less likely than an urban woman to give birth with the assistance of a skilled health professional.[9] In Southern Asia, wealthy urban women are six times more likely to have access to the services of skilled attendants than are poor rural women (E/CN.6/2014/3). The practice of female genital mutilation/cutting is still present in at least 29 developing countries — affecting an estimated 100 million to 140 million women and girls — and the practice is more common in rural areas in the majority.[10] Worldwide, 35 per cent of women have experienced intimate-partner or non-partner violence — and up to 70 per cent of women have experienced intimate-partner violence in some countries — but the available data on violence against women does not allow for comparisons between urban and rural areas; however, some studies suggest that violence carried out by intimate partners is more prevalent in rural areas and by non-partners in urban areas.[11]

6. Although in 2012, 89 per cent of the world had access to improved sources of drinking water compared with 76 per cent in 1990, 748 million people still lacked access to clean drinking water, most of whom lived in rural areas. In contrast, 2.5 billion people, the vast majority the rural poor, lacked improved sanitation. Expenditures for rural sanitation take up approximately 10 per cent of total funding for water, sanitation and hygiene.[12] While the global electrification rate increased from 76 per cent in 1990 to 83 per cent in 2010, an estimated 1.2 billion people still did not have access to electricity.[13] More than 95 per cent of people without access to modern energy services lived either in sub-Saharan Africa or Asia, and 84 per cent lived in rural areas. Nearly 3 billion people used solid biomass to cook their

[7] Ibid.; United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), *Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2013/14: Teaching and Learning: Achieving equality for all* (Paris, 2014). Available from http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0022/002256/225660e.pdf.

[8] United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), *Ending Child Marriage: Progress and prospects* (New York, 2014).

[9] UN-Women, *Progress of the World's Women 2015 — 2016: Transforming economies, realizing right* (New York, 2015).

[10] Population Reference Bureau, "Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting: Data and Trends Update 2014", http://www.prb.org/Publications/Datasheets/2014/fgm-wallchart-2014.aspx (accessed 23 July 2015).

[11] See http://www.unwomen.org/en/what-we-do/ending-violence-against-women/facts-and-figures#notes (accessed 23 July 2015); Cathy McIlwaine, "Urbanization and gender-based violence: exploring the paradoxes in the global South," *Environment and Urbanization* 25:1, 65-79 (2013).

[12] World Health Organization and United Nations Children's Fund, Progress on Drinking Water and Sanitation: 2014 Update (Geneva, 2014).

[13] See www.se4all.org.

meals and heat their homes, the vast majority in rural areas.[14] Indoor air pollution, produced primarily by inefficient and dirty cook stoves and fuels, causes some 4.3 million premature deaths worldwide, above all of women and children, more deaths than HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and malnutrition combined.[15] Critically, sex-disaggregated data do not exist for tracking and assessing women's access to and use of water, sanitation and energy services.

7. Rural women are at the forefront of coping with the impacts of climate change, natural disasters and post-conflict situations. The gender-differentiated impacts of those situations can intensify the constraints that place women reliant on agriculture and natural resources for their livelihoods at a disadvantage. As agricultural work becomes more labour-intensive or alternative sources of food and income need to be found, the burden of additional work often falls on women. Climate- and disaster-related health risks and water and fuel scarcity further add to women's unpaid care work. Women are particularly affected by changes in the availability and quality of resources during and after conflict. Women's empowerment is therefore critical for building resilience and adapting to climate change as well as for post-conflict economic recovery.[16]

8. Key findings from a forthcoming study by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the Poverty and Environment Initiative[17] and the World Bank on Malawi, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania indicate that the lower agricultural productivity of women farmers compared to male farmers is the result of lack of access to key productive resources, such as land, labour, agricultural inputs, information and technology. The gender gap in agricultural productivity ranges anywhere from 4 to 40 per cent, depending on the country and the food or cash crop in question, and could cost up to $100 million in Malawi, $65 million in Uganda and $106 million in the United Republic of Tanzania.[18] The economic benefits of closing the gender agricultural productivity gap could be quite substantial. The Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme, supported by the African Union's New Partnership for Africa's Development, encourages African countries to allocate 10 per cent of their national budget to agriculture; UN-Women would support setting specific targets to assist women farmers.

9. In spite of being farmers, workers, entrepreneurs, service providers, and agents of change, rural women and girls continue to face persistent structural constraints that prevent them from fully participating in socioeconomic and political life and contributing to the improvement of their circumstances. Owing to cultural and legal norms, discriminatory practices and entrenched gender and class inequalities, rural

[14] International Energy Agency, *World Energy Outlook 2011: Energy for All* (Paris, 2011).

[15] Stephen S. Lim et al., "A comparative risk assessment of burden of disease and injury attributable to 67 risk factors and risk factor clusters in 21 regions 1990-2010: a systematic analysis for the global burden of disease study 2010", *The Lancet*, vol. 380, iss. 9859 (15 December 2010), 2224-2260.

[16] UN-Women and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), *Women and Natural Resource Management: Unlocking the Peacebuilding Potential* (New York, 2013).

[17] Of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).

[18] For further analysis of the gender gap in agriculture in Ethiopia, Niger and Nigeria, see: World Bank, *Levelling the Field. Improving Opportunities for Women Farmers in Africa* (Washington, D.C., 2014).

women and girls often have limited access to land and other productive resources, such as agricultural inputs and extension services, credit and savings, information and technology, all of which limit their economic potential. They face more difficulties than men in gaining access to public services (health, education, energy, and water and sanitation), social protection, decent employment opportunities and local and national markets and institutions. They are the most affected by malnutrition and hunger. The impact of unpaid care work on the use of rural women's time further restricts their ability to take advantage of on- and off-farm employment and market opportunities in the agricultural and other sectors.

10. The empowerment of rural women is therefore critical for the realization of their rights and to secure the well-being of their families and communities. Their contributions are vital to agricultural and rural development and local and national economies. Rural women are key to the success of virtually all the proposed sustainable development goals, not only proposed goal 5, to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, but also across the framework, particularly synergies with goals 1 (end poverty in all its forms everywhere) and 2 (end hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture) (A/68/970). The political momentum generated by the outcome document of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development (A/66/288) and the 20th anniversary commemoration and global review process of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[19] should enable accelerated progress in the implementation of legal and policy frameworks benefiting rural women, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.[20] Building on the lessons learned from the Millennium Development Goals and factoring in the unequal progress between men and women and rural and urban areas, the post-2015 development agenda, supported by the Addis Ababa Accord of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development (A/CONF.227/L.1), offers an unparalleled opportunity for reinvigorated commitment to gender equality and the advancement of rural women.

II. Empowerment of women in rural areas

A. Effective, sustainable and gender-responsive rural development

11. Member States have reiterated the importance of empowering rural women as critical agents for advancing agricultural and rural development through events commemorating the International Day for Rural Women in 2014 (held in Rome and in New York). In this vein, the Government of Australia is strongly encouraging women to take up more prominent leadership positions in rural communities and to participate in rural development. The government sponsors the Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation Rural Women's Award, which identifies and supports emerging leaders to drive change within primary industries and advance economic and social development. The Government of Botswana began implementation of the Affirmative Action Framework for Remote Area Communities (2015-2025), coordinated by the Ministry of Local Government and

[19] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women*, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995 (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

[20] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

Rural Development, covering all aspects of social wellbeing, including employment, training, and social and economic development. Such policy instruments are designed and implemented to enable rural women's empowerment and to address gender disparities and discrimination that exist across different sectors.

12. Rural women are not a homogeneous group, and their circumstances vary according to, inter alia, location, income, age, race/ethnicity, culture and religion, as well as their access to productive assets, capabilities and opportunities and the extent of their voice and agency. Specific groups, such as indigenous women, households headed by females or migrant women, may have particular needs and priorities, thus requiring policy and institutional responses that are capable of addressing this diversity with tailored approaches. In the light of the multiple and intersecting inequalities that women in rural areas face, the Ministry for Women in Paraguay has a specific set of initiatives for indigenous women, ranging from public-private partnerships to build capacity for rapid entry into the labour market to strengthening food security by encouraging the production of high-protein foods. It is also promoting sustainable agriculture and protection of agrobiodiversity by supporting women producers of stevia (*ka'ahe'e* in Guaraní) throughout the value chain, including marketing and export.

13. Supporting the full and equal participation of rural women in decision-making at all levels is necessary for the creation of more representative institutions, improved governance and the realization of women's voice, agency and rights. This would entail greater coordination between national gender machineries and line ministries as well as decentralization of gender machineries to the local level. For the past decade in Italy, the participation of women has increased in new forms of local governance, such as integrated local projects and local development plans (implemented by local action groups as part of the European Union's Leader+ initiative). In Japan, the number of women holding leadership positions is increasing, but women make up only 7 per cent of the members of agricultural committees and cooperatives. In response, the Government aims to create an environment in which women can challenge standing authorities and change the attitudes of men that may pose obstacles to women in their path towards leadership. In Jordan, the participation of women in decision-making positions in village councils and cooperatives has increased by 25 per cent as a result of the passage of the Municipalities Law of 2011.

14. In 2013, the Government of Kenya put in place the National Environmental Policy, which provides a framework for an integrated approach to environmental planning and sustainable management that mainstreams gender equality and builds incentives to attract women into environmental management. The Government has also established quotas for the membership of women on water management boards as a means of enabling them to decide matters that have implications on their quality of life and livelihoods. The Government has also established measures to strengthen local mechanisms for sustainable land rights administration and management involving rural women as key agents.

15. Recognizing women as food producers, care providers and income-earning farmers involves addressing production constraints, including lack of access to productive resources, services, information, credit and markets. Agricultural projects in Jordan have targeted rural women by engaging them in a range of agricultural, livestock, and food processing activities. Rural women have been

trained in various methods of food manufacture, leading to the creation of a number of enterprises and the formation of a women's association to promote marketing and sales, including through mobile agricultural exhibitions held all across the country where women can sell their products directly to consumers. The Government of Sweden has developed a Gender Tool Box for its international cooperation efforts, which encompasses key areas for supporting rural women's economic empowerment: women and land rights, women and food security, and women and water, sanitation and hygiene.

16. Improving sex-disaggregated data and gender-sensitive indicators on access to and control over resources, assets and income, agricultural production, time use, leadership and participation is essential for implementing, monitoring, tracking and reporting progress on interventions for rural women, particularly in the light of the post-2015 development framework and the sustainable development goals. The General Statistics Directorate in Jordan has established gender-sensitive indicators for income and poverty as part of an indicator set for monitoring progress in achieving gender equality disaggregated by sector. In Kenya, the national gender machinery, in collaboration with the National Bureau of Statistics, produces a Gender Data Sheet every two years, which contains sex-disaggregated data on all sectors. It also released in 2013 a reporting tool for use by the public sector to report quarterly and annually on gender mainstreaming and freedom from discrimination activities. The Government of the United States of America supported the adoption of the Women's Empowerment in Agriculture Index, which focuses on access to and decision-making power over agricultural production, assets and resources, use of income, use of time, and leadership roles in the community; the first baseline data report on 13 countries was released in May 2014.

17. In the United Nations system, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has led the way in assisting Governments to improve the availability and use of gender statistics to inform policy and programme formulation in agriculture and rural development. FAO has prepared capacity development materials for Member States to: (a) enhance the social dimension in agricultural censuses, related rural surveys and food security monitoring, including generation of relevant sex-disaggregated indicators; and (b) include an agricultural/rural dimension in the ongoing debates about gender statistics. In addition, the FAO guidelines for the 2020 World Programme for the Census of Agriculture include a special theme on intra-household distribution of ownership and managerial decisions. This allows countries to obtain gender-specific information about decision-making on agricultural holdings, as well as on the ownership by women of critical assets, such as land and livestock.

B. Recognizing, reducing and redistributing unpaid care work

18. Rural women invest considerable amounts of time in unremunerated activities related to food production and processing, water and fuel collection, and care of children and the elderly. Much of this work remains informal and unpaid, and is largely unrecognized and undervalued. Women and children bear the main negative impacts of collection and transport of fuel and water, with women in many developing countries spending from one to four hours a day collecting biomass for

fuel.[21] A study of the correlation between time and water poverty in 25 countries in sub-Saharan Africa estimated that women spend at least 16 million hours a day collecting drinking water; men spend 6 million hours; and children, 4 million hours.[22] Rural women spend more time than urban women and men in domestic and household work, including time spent obtaining water and fuel and processing food. Time spent by women and girls on domestic chores limits their opportunities to earn an income or attend school, thus affecting rural consumption, investment and saving.

19. The Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights provided recommendations to Member States on how to recognize, value, reduce and redistribute unpaid care work, as well as adjust relevant policies and improve women's access to services and infrastructure (A/68/293). As such, public policies are needed to position care as a social and collective responsibility rather than an individual problem. New measures are required to capture women's contributions to the care economy, which tend to be unremunerated and unaccounted for in national income measures. This will entail the strengthening of capacities of national statistics offices to collect, analyse and disseminate gender-sensitive statistics on women's unpaid care work in order to increase the recognition of this work and to contribute to gender-sensitive policymaking.

20. In its resolution 68/139, the General Assembly called on Member States to recognize, reduce and redistribute unpaid care work. Steps need to be taken to ensure that women's unpaid work and contributions to on-farm and off-farm production, including income generated in the informal sector, are recognized, as well as for the inclusion of women's unpaid work in official statistics. In an effort to reduce unpaid care burdens, the resolution called for investment in, strengthening access to and critical use of infrastructure (such as energy and transport), science and technology (such as time- and labour-saving technologies), local services (such as provision of safe and reliable water and sanitation) and capacity-building and human resources. Furthermore, the resolution calls for the promotion of programmes and services to enable rural women and men to reconcile their work and family responsibilities and to encourage men to share equally with women, household, childcare and other care responsibilities.

21. In Finland, for example, the social protection system is universal and accessible to all men and women; this translates into responsive maternity care, maternity paternity leave, child and elderly care centres and school lunch programmes, all of which potentially reduce rural women's unpaid workload. In Cambodia, a Five Year Strategy Plan on Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment (2014-2018) calls for increased access to day care and community kindergarten facilities, reducing the amount of time spent by rural women in providing child care so that they can dedicate efforts to income-earning activities. In Cuba, the Association for Animal Production has developed gender-responsive economic empowerment projects for rural women that involve capacity development, increased female participation in cooperatives, creation of child care facilities and provision of support to women who are performing traditionally male

[21] World Bank, *Household Cookstoves, Environment, Health and Climate Change* (Washington, D.C., 2011).

[22] World Health Organization and United Nations Children's Fund, *Progress on Drinking Water and Sanitation: 2012 Update* (Geneva, 2012).

roles. In Egypt, the State is obliged to enable women to reconcile their family duties and work requirements by providing care and protection for children, mothers and women heads of household, as well as the elderly and women in vulnerable situations, all of which affects rural women. In Japan, the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries is supporting rural women so that they may balance their work and parenting activities in farming villages. In the Republic of Korea, the Government provides subsidies for infant and child care in rural areas, and in 2014 provided helper services to rural families with members who had been in accidents and/or who were ill (15,118 families), housekeeping services for seniors and vulnerable families (12,285 families), and for women before and after childbirth (1,543 helpers).

22. Women in rural areas have the major responsibility for securing the household water and energy supply, which constitutes a significant part of the unpaid work burden. Improvements in infrastructure services, especially water and electricity, and a wide range of sustainable energy technologies and other innovative techniques, including improved cook stoves, rainwater harvesting schemes, efficient grinding mills and other food-processing equipment, can help free up the time spent by women on domestic work and the provision of care. Considerations of women's unpaid work burdens are particularly critical given the current context of declining supplies of water and fuel linked to deforestation, desertification and climate change, which are increasing the projected number of people who are exposed to significant water and energy stress. As part of the efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals, the Government of Cambodia has invested in water supply systems, leading to a recorded increase in the rural population who have access to safe water sources from 24 per cent in 1998 to 50 per cent in 2015, thereby reducing women's unpaid care work in fetching water.

23. In Jordan, nearly complete coverage has been achieved in the percentage of homes connected to electricity and safe drinking water and sanitary disposal networks, with virtual parity between rural and urban areas. In Cuba, 3,500 rural communities have benefited from guaranteed access to potable water through the installation of some 3,000 aqueducts and the operation of windmills, water pumps and other new technologies which, in addition to reducing unpaid care work, has led to increased employment for women. In Kenya, the Government has been promoting the establishment of community water resource user associations to assist in self-regulation of water use and to develop innovative community-based methods and technologies for water harvesting, and encourages addressing gender role issues in those processes. Under the umbrella of the Safe Access to Fuel and Energy approach, FAO promotes the use of fuel-efficient stoves, alternative fuels and improved cooking practices to reduce rural people's need for firewood, thereby diminishing the related burden of unpaid care work on women and girls.

C. Employment, decent work and social protection

24. In its resolution 68/139, the General Assembly called for ensuring equal access by rural women to productive employment and decent work, social services and appropriate social protection/social security measures. It also called for the integration of increased employment opportunities for rural women into all international and national development and poverty eradication strategies.

25. The publication *The State of Food Insecurity in the World* indicates that domestic agriculture is still the main supply for food and is the principle source of income and employment in rural areas.[23] It is nonetheless important to note the growing importance of non-agricultural off-farm employment in rural areas in developing countries, for example, factories and businesses (such as bakeries, arts and crafts production, and renewable energy and provision of water, sanitation and hygiene services) as well as marketing and trading through rural cooperatives. Despite the fact that women make up some 43 per cent of the agricultural labour force in developing countries, agriculture alone cannot reduce rural poverty.[24] Rural off-farm employment can help households to diversify their income sources and insure themselves against economic and environmental shocks that might affect agricultural production. In addition to taking steps to support remunerative non-agricultural employment of rural women, improving working conditions on- and off-farm and promoting the full integration of women into the formal economy are essential to address the underlying structural causes of rural women's poverty and disadvantage.

26. Agricultural and rural non-farm employment are both critical for rural development, food security, poverty reduction and rural women's economic empowerment. However, decent work and productive employment remains a challenge in rural areas, which are usually characterized by labour markets with high levels of informality, labour force fragmentation, information asymmetries and the prevalence of multiple-job-holding and casual work arrangements. Rural working conditions are often deficient, with very limited access to social protection. Labour legislation is often not enforced, and rural workers are the least organized and the least protected. Among agricultural workers, women are disproportionately represented in the unskilled segment of the workforce and are often hired without a formal contract and on a temporary or seasonal basis. Both women and men have lower than average earnings in rural areas and, in absolute terms, rural women are at the bottom of the earnings ladder.[9, 25]

27. Various government interventions offer organized approaches to creating sustainable business environments and increasing labour and social protections for rural women. In the Republic of Korea, the Government has expanded subsidies for women farmers' pensions in order to raise their occupational status and empower women as co-operators of farms. The number of women receiving pension premium support rose from 126,862 women in 2013 to 146,279 in 2014 (an increase of 15.3 percent). In Finland, the Government supports farm relief services as part of a social protection programme in rural areas, which include substitute assistance, an annual leave entitlement of 26 days, subsidized help for 120 hours annually and additional services at full price. The Government also administers earnings-related pensions, which secure a reasonable consumption level for employees and self-employed persons after retirement and help to ensure basic income security for all pensioners. In Cuba, the inclusion of rural women in associations and collectives and promotion of jobs and social protection has increased the participation of women in non-State-run agriculture after legal changes in 2011. The Government of

[23] FAO, IFAD and WFP, *The State of Food Insecurity in the World: Strengthening the enabling environment for food security and nutrition* (Rome, 2014).

[24] FAO, *The State of Food and Agriculture 2010-2011: Women in Agriculture — Closing the Gender Gap for Development* (Rome, 2011).

[25] FAO, *Decent Rural Employment for Food Security: A Case for Action* (Rome, 2012).

Azerbaijan, in collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), established resource centres for improving employment opportunities for women between 25 and 60 years of age and a labour fair for rural women to access 114 job vacancies offered by 21 companies through the programme "Empowering Rural Women to Participate in Economic and Social Life".

28. Many initiatives by Governments focus on improving the productive capacity of rural women and diversifying their sources of income by providing business training. In Cambodia, women's development centres provide rural women with access to greater economic opportunities and skill development, and are exploring strategies to apply public-private partnership principles with the purpose of transforming the centres from providers of vocational training into enterprise development centres. In the United Arab Emirates, the project "Fostering Women's Entrepreneurship in the Agri-food Sector" was implemented by FAO to promote viable enterprises that are led by women in the field of agribusiness and the agrofood industry.

29. Through the EXPO Milan 2015 framework, Italy will create an estimated 2,600 women's enterprises by 2020. The Government of Italy has also put in place women's associations to support women farmers. The Government of Kenya, in partnership with the private sector, conducts training on entrepreneurship, bookkeeping and basic business administration to enable women who qualify for various catalytic funds to set up or improve their businesses. In the Philippines, the Promotion of Rural Employment through Self-Employment and Entrepreneurship Development programme provides capacity training and skills development. In Botswana, the Government promotes access by women entrepreneurs to local, regional and international markets. The Ministry of Labour and Home Affairs works with the national gender machinery to conduct annual women's expositions where women can showcase their products, network, and interact with formal business communities (enrolment has more than quadrupled since 1999). The Government also provides support to women's groups in starting income-generating activities; over the past 10 years, the Government has funded 310 groups benefitting 2,480 individuals who otherwise would have been unemployed or destitute.

D. Access to and control over land and other productive assets

30. In its resolution 68/139, the General Assembly called for ensuring the equal rights of rural women to own, control and lease land and other property, including through inheritance, as well as for them to be granted equal access to economic resources and financial services. The Committee on World Food Security's Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture and Food Systems (CFS 2014/41/4 Rev.1) affirm the need for "advancing women's equal tenure rights, and their equal access to and control over productive land, natural resources, inputs, productive tools" and further "promoting access to extension, advisory, and financial services, education, training, markets, and information".

31. Barriers that prevent women's access, use, and control over land and other productive resources — and the income arising from cultivation and other uses of land — are widespread and significant. They include inadequate legal and policy frameworks, ineffective implementation at national and local levels, and discriminatory cultural norms and practices. According to the Social Institutions and

Gender Index (2014) of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, women and men have equal rights to own, use, and control land in only 37 per cent of 161 countries. In 59 per cent of those countries, the law guarantees women and men the same land rights; however, customary, traditional and religious practices discriminate against women and undermine the full implementation of the law. In 4 per cent of those countries, women explicitly have no legal right to own, use or control land. Not only do women have less access to land than men, but they are also often restricted to so-called secondary land rights, meaning that they hold such rights through male family members and thus risk losing those entitlements in the case of divorce, widowhood or the migration of the male relative.[26]

32. The analysis by UN-Women of World Bank data shows that significant progress was made between 1990 and 2010 in reducing legal discrimination against women regarding their ability to inherit and own assets in their own name, although progress has been uneven across regions.[9] Countries in sub-Saharan Africa, which began the period with the largest number of legal restrictions compared with other regions, have made significant strides. For example, in Botswana, the Government encourages efforts to employ positive discrimination by land boards when allocating land in remote areas, where a higher percentage is reserved for local people, including women and young girls. In Kenya, the National Land Policy, which recognizes women's right to own property, has led to the enactment of gender-responsive laws, including the Matrimonial Property Act (2013), which safeguards the rights of women to own property, both during and upon the dissolution of marriage.

33. For rural women and men, land is perhaps the most important household asset to support production and provide for food, nutrition and income security. The Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security embrace gender equality as one of the main guiding principles of implementation and stress the importance of compliance in all programmes, policies and technical assistance to improve governance of tenure. In China, for example, in order to implement the central authority's policies on the management and transfer of contracted rural land, the Ministry of Agriculture requires relevant departments to conduct registration and certification work to safeguard the land rights and practical concerns of rural women. Rural women's names are recorded on the register as well as on the land certificate, which assures their legal rights. In Cambodia, a land-titling programme under the 2001 Land Law empowers women through joint titling and ensuring rights that are equal to men's in the case of divorce, and inheritance rights in the case of death. In the Philippines, 674,486 women have been provided with Certificate of Land Ownership Awards.

34. With the objective of providing lessons and good practices related to the adoption and effective implementation of laws, policies and programmes on women's rights to land and other productive resources, UN-Women and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights produced a handbook in 2013, *Realizing Women's Rights to Land and Other Productive Resources*. The FAO Gender and Land Rights Database analyses the extent to which national legal

[26] FAO, "Gender and land rights", Economic and Social Perspectives Policy Brief No. 8 (Rome, 2010).

frameworks and policies and programmes support the advancement of women or induce gender-differentiated access to land in 84 countries.

35. Since the food crisis in 2007 and 2008, and a follow-up surge in global food prices in 2010 and 2011,[27] an increase in demand for food, combined with a growing demand for biofuel and other commodities, has encouraged large-scale acquisitions of land by foreign and domestic investors in developing countries — encompassing millions of hectares of land over the past decade. This trend has dire implications for local communities and livelihoods, particularly for rural women. A recent study of such processes worldwide revealed that rare and limited gains were overwhelmed by social exclusion, dispossession and gender inequalities. First, in none of the cases examined did women have any decision-making power in the planning of projects or negotiation of resettlement and rehabilitation. Second, discriminatory compensation and resettlement almost universally reproduced women's lack of land rights by allocating compensation plots to male heads of households. Third, as women are the most dependent on common property resources for work and income in most agrarian contexts, they are the most affected by the enclosure of land, the destruction of commons and the resulting losses of livestock. Fourth, land dispossession was correlated with increased violence, putting women's physical security particularly at risk. Finally, in all cases, women recognized the threats that dispossession posed for their well-being and played important roles in opposing large-scale land acquisition (A/69/156).

36. Women farmers also face limited access to agricultural inputs and extension services as compared with their male counterparts, which compromises their productivity and food and nutritional security. In Kenya, the Government offers reductions in the taxes on fertilizers and other agricultural inputs, which greatly benefits poor women, who make up the majority of food producers. In 2014, the Feed the Future programme of the Government of the United States of America enabled smallholder farmers, including women, in targeted countries to earn more than $530 million in new sales of agricultural products, a threefold increase over the previous year. In response to challenges faced by rural women in accessing technology, UN-Women, FAO, IFAD, WFP and the African Union organized a Sharefair in October 2014 on the theme "Rural women's technologies to improve food security, nutrition and productive family farming." Several partners, including the Regional Network on Gender and Rural Livelihoods for Eastern and Southern Africa, promoted innovative technologies that support women smallholder farmers. Its South-South component brought together rural women innovators from around the region, and offered them a platform to interact with policymakers, academics, food manufacturers, investors, technology experts and others.

37. Access to financial services enhances economic development and can play a key role in reducing poverty in rural areas. Yet access to credit, savings, insurance and remittance facilities is usually limited in rural areas. Furthermore, capacity constraints on both the supply and the demand sides, such as the insufficient number of products tailored to rural needs and limited financial literacy, make the availability of financial services in rural areas even scarcer. Women's access to financial services is constrained by lack of collateral and discriminatory legal, customary and cultural norms. The Global Financial Inclusion Database (Global

[27] FAO Food Price Index, available from http://www.fao.org/worldfoodsituation/foodpricesindex/en/ (accessed 28 June 2015).

Findex) shows that women, the poor, youth and rural residents are at the greatest disadvantage. The 2014 Global Findex reports that between 2011 and 2014, 700 million adults became account holders, increasing the percentage of the world's adult population with an account from 51 to 62; the number of those without an account — "the unbanked" — dropped by 20 per cent to 2 billion adults. Clear rural-urban disparities exist, with rural areas in low-income countries showing very low numbers of formal bank accounts. Furthermore, although 47 per cent of women in low-income countries have bank accounts, only 22 per cent in rural areas hold accounts.[28]

38. Initiatives to improve rural women's skills at management of their finances have become more common, and the availability of information on financial sector development worldwide, including the status of women, has contributed to policymakers' and stakeholders' being better informed. Strengthening the access of rural women to adequate financial services entails the identification of policy solutions that can support the expansion of financial inclusion, taking advantage of new technologies to overcome barriers and reach underserved segments of the population in rural areas.

39. To help women with financial shortfalls in developing their entrepreneurial enterprises, the Ministry of Finance of China, the Bank of China and the All-China Women's Federation are implementing a low-interest secure loan policy for women, which provides start-up funds with a maximum loan amount of up to 100,000 Yuan per capita for rural women. In Jordan, the Agricultural Credit Corporation seeks to reduce rural women's poverty by granting loans to support and develop the agriculture sector; the percentage of loans obtained by women in 2009-2014 ranged between 57 to 64 per cent of the total. The Government of Azerbaijan, through the State Agency on Agricultural Credits, is meeting the challenge of financial inclusion by allocating loans to 53,000 rural women (39.2 per cent of the total). In Egypt, the Ministry of State for Local Development supports rural women by providing flexible loans, along with training and technical assistance to run small- and medium-sized businesses, and new marketing opportunities through exhibitions of women's products for local and foreign markets. The National Council for Women, in collaboration with the Ministries of State for Administrative Development and the Interior, UN-Women, UNDP and several non-governmental organizations and governorates, has helped to issue national identification cards to enable rural women to access government services, including loans and credit facilities and services. In Paraguay, the Agricultural Loans Facility emphasizes the financial inclusion of rural women, offering financial products that meet local needs, such as a community bank that loaned $580,170 to 1,676 women and 533 men between January and April 2015. The Government of Kenya through the Women Enterprise Fund has allocated Kshs 4.5 billion ($50.6 million) in loans to 864,920 women borrowers since 2007, while over 404,800 women have received training in business management skills, and 52 savings and credit cooperatives have been registered. The scheme uses a mobile phone loan repayment system, in partnership with private-public actors.

[28] Available from http://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/globalfindex (accessed 28 June 2015).

E. Food and nutrition security

40. The Addis Ababa Accord on FfD has declared: "It is unacceptable that close to 800 million people are chronically undernourished and do not have access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food. With the majority of the poor living in rural areas, we emphasize the need to revitalize the agricultural sector, promote rural development, and ensure food security, notably in developing countries, in a sustainable manner, which will lead to rich payoffs across the sustainable development goals. We will support sustainable agriculture, including forestry, fisheries and pastoralism.... [W]e will strengthen our efforts to enhance food security and nutrition and focus our efforts on smallholders and women farmers, as well as on agricultural cooperatives and farmer's networks." It is the case that rural women and men often play different roles in guaranteeing food security for their households and communities. Women tend to raise small livestock and grow and prepare most of the food consumed in the household, while men tend to grow mainly cash crops for the market. Yet even though women are the main producers of food in many developing countries, persisting barriers prevent them from fully contributing to food and nutrition security and cause them to suffer disproportionately from hunger and malnutrition.

41. According to *The State of Food Insecurity in the World*, in the 2012-2014 period the prevalence of undernourishment fell from 18.7 to 11.3 per cent globally and from 23.4 to 13.5 per cent for the developing countries. However, eradicating hunger remains a major global challenge. The latest estimates indicate that 805 million people were chronically undernourished in 2012-14, with insufficient food for an active and healthy life. The vast majority of hungry people live in developing regions, which saw a 42 per cent reduction in the prevalence of undernourished people between 1990-92 and 2012-14.[23] Nevertheless, the growth of between one out of four children worldwide is stunted, which is evidence of long-term undernutrition that compromises mental and physical development. Nearly half of all deaths of children under the age of five are attributable to undernutrition.[29] Anaemia, caused by poor nutrition and deficiencies of iron and other micronutrients, affects 42 per cent of all pregnant women globally and contributes to maternal mortality and low birth weight. However, limitations of national and global data sets mean there is very little information on the gender dimensions of hunger. Data gaps pose a major obstacle to gender analysis and for the monitoring of food and nutrition security. Sex-disaggregated data are collected only at the national level on a limited number of internationally comparable indicators, such as body mass weight and certain micronutrient deficiencies (A/69/156).

42. Steps have been taken by Member States and the international development community to ensure food and nutrition security in rural communities, taking gender considerations into account. In Cuba, a collaboration among UNDP, the Centre for Women's Studies and others on the "Gender equality with quality management for food security," programme recognizes and promotes quality systems and practices that favour gender equality in agriculture and food security. The Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Family Planning in Djibouti addresses malnutrition by providing income-generation opportunities to women farmers. The Government of Japan has promoted the improvement of the situation

[29] Available from http://data.unicef.org/nutrition/malnutrition (accessed 28 June 2015).

of women in rural areas based on the Basic Law on Food, Agriculture and Rural Areas and the Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society since 1999. In 2013, the Feed the Future programme of the United States of America helped over 7 million smallholder farmers access new tools and technologies to improve yields and boost incomes, reached 12.5 million children with nutrition interventions, and provided support to nearly 91,000 women farmers in homestead gardening, thereby improving access to nutrient-dense foods and increasing income for women and children. Through the joint programme "Renew Efforts to Address Child Hunger and Under-Nutrition (REACH)", FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP and the World Health Organization (WHO) help national governments to plan, prioritize and manage nutrition actions among multiple stakeholders. By engaging different sectors, the REACH programme has helped to build and strengthen national programmes to overcome child and maternal under-nutrition in 16 countries.[30]

43. In 2014, FAO developed an e-learning course on "Gender in Food and Nutrition Security" aimed at strengthening the capacities of national and international policymakers and development practitioners to design and implement policies and programmes that are gender-responsive and sustainable. Recognizing that climate change, biodiversity loss, and land degradation pose serious threats to food and nutrition security, and in response to the dearth of quality data and information on the gender dimensions, the Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research Programme on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security produced a "Gender and Inclusion Toolbox: Participatory Research in Climate Change and Agriculture" to support diagnostic and action research for gender sensitive and socially inclusive climate change programmes in the rural development context.[31] The UNDP Rio+ World Centre for Sustainable Development has also made the case for incorporating gender concerns into the nexus of gender, climate and agriculture policies to further gender equality in the context of sustainable development.[32]

III. Conclusions and recommendations

44. **Member States and United Nations entities have implemented measures to improve the situation of rural women, expanding their access to employment, entrepreneurship, training and leadership opportunities, social services and protection, and land and productive resources. They have also taken steps to recognize, reduce and redistribute the burden of unpaid care work on women. Despite some progress in improving their status, the majority of rural women worldwide still live in difficult conditions. The challenges they face have been amplified by the combined impact of the economic and financial crises, volatile energy and food prices, demographic changes, conflicts, climate change, large-scale land deals, and lack of investment in rural and agricultural development.**

[30] Bangladesh, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Chad, Ethiopia, Ghana, Haiti, Mali, Mozambique, Myanmar, Nepal, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal, Uganda and the United Republic of Tanzania.

[31] C. Jost, N. Ferdous, T. D. Spicer, *Gender and Inclusion Toolbox: Participatory Research in Climate Change and Agriculture*. Consultative Group for International Agricultural Research Programme on Climate Change, Agriculture and Food Security, CARE International and the World Agroforestry Centre (Copenhagen, 2014).

[32] Leisa Perch and Rosaly Byrd, Gender in the Climate-Smart Agriculture Discourse: Making the case for gender-smartness," Rio+ Centre Working Papers, 2015.

45. **While important progress has been made in many countries towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, including the gender goals and targets,[6] rural women have scored lowest compared with women in urban areas and with rural and urban men. More robust gender-responsive approaches and greater investment in rural development and rural women are needed in the post-2015 framework. Rural women are key to achieving virtually all the proposed sustainable development goals. Rural women are critical agents of change, whose economic empowerment will make substantial contributions to local and national economies, social development, environmental management, and a fair and just world for all.**

46. **Member States are encouraged to implement the following recommendations, presented for consideration by the General Assembly, to improve the situation of women in rural areas:**

(a) **Take action on existing commitments to rural development and rural women's empowerment and human rights, in particular the provisions of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and its 20-year global review (E/CN.6/2015/3), and looking forward to the proposed sustainable development goals and the fulfilment of the Addis Ababa Accord on Financing for Development;**

(b) **Integrate gender perspectives into national rural and agricultural development plans and programmes, where lacking, and ensure coordination between gender machineries and line ministries at all levels;**

(c) **Ensure rural women's full and equal rights to land and inheritance, land tenure security, common property and common resources, and equal access to justice and legal support, by designing, reviewing and implementing relevant laws and policies, including those for civil registration;**

(d) **Increase public and private investment in rural women to close the gender gap in agriculture, and support women smallholder farmers with improved access to extension and financial services, agricultural inputs, markets and innovative technologies;**

(e) **Mitigate post-conflict situations and impacts of climate change by ensuring rural women's full participation and decision-making in natural resource governance;**

(f) **Ensure equal access to decent work in agricultural and non-agricultural sectors, including in sustainable enterprises and cooperatives; design and implement gender-responsive social protection; and improve rural women's skills and capacities through technical and vocational training;**

(g) **Recognize, reduce and redistribute the unpaid care work burden of rural women by investing in relevant infrastructure, public services and time- and labour-saving technologies, and by promoting women's paid employment in the care economy;**

(h) **Develop and implement gender-responsive climate-resilient agricultural production for food and nutrition security; and support rural and indigenous women in the conservation and sustainable use of traditional crops and biodiversity;**

(i) Increase the capacity of national statistical offices and other relevant institutions to collect, analyse and disseminate sex- and age-disaggregated data and produce gender statistics on time use, land tenure, water, sanitation, energy, among others, to support policies and action to improve the situation of rural women and monitor and track implementation of the sustainable development goals.

47. **The United Nations system and other international organizations are encouraged to support Member States to:**

(a) Design and implement effective, sustainable and gender-responsive rural and agricultural development policies and programmes;

(b) Recognize, reduce and redistribute women's and girls' unpaid care work in rural areas;

(c) Develop and implement policies and programmes to promote women's access to decent work opportunities, including on and off-farm employment;

(d) Plan, design and implement gender-responsive social protection schemes that focus on rural women; and

(e) Collect, analyse and disseminate sex- and age-disaggregated data and gender statistics on rural women's access to and control over land and other productive assets, the distribution and value of unpaid care work, entrepreneurship, and access to decent work and social protection.